

Freedom

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NOTES.

The Terror in Ireland.

In burning down a considerable portion of Cork, the "Black and Tans," as the auxiliary police force in Ireland is termed, have reached a climax in their outrages on the Irish people. Recruited from ex-officers of the army that fought Germany and her allies, they have proved themselves willing tools in the hands of the gang of scoundrels who now rule the British Empire. There is no crime, from rape to murder, that these blackguards have not committed with the encouragement of the Cabinet, and with the passive acquiescence of the British people. So as to show the contempt he has for the intelligence of the voting cattle of this country, the Chief Secretary for Ireland had the audacity to suggest that the Sinn Feiners set fire to Cork, in which he was backed up by a section of the Press. That the people of this country should permit the outrages committed in their name by the Government forces is a sure sign of the degradation brought about by the war; but that they could possibly believe the suggestion of the Irish Secretary would show a depth of mental degeneration almost unfathomable. *Young Ireland* of November 27 states that more than thirty Irish men, women, and children were killed in the preceding week by the Government forces; and it gives names and full particulars—five of the victims were boys from 10 to 14 years of age. Reports of similar outrages committed by the Germans in Belgium stirred up great indignation in this country, but now they are committed by their own Government most of the people are silent. The idea that what the State does must be right has sunk into men's minds to such an extent that even murder and arson do not disturb them. Nietzsche's description of the State as a "cold-blooded monster" applies with great force to-day.

The Unemployed.

The workers are now realising the truth of the wise man's remark that "gratitude is a lively sense of favours to come." Whilst the war was raging, and as long as the capitalists and the wealthy folk thought their riches were in danger, they had no great objection to raising wages and reducing hours of labour; but now the danger has passed and a slump in trade comes along, the workers are discharged and thrown on the scrap-heap. The capitalists do not care if the workers starve. Why should they? A great majority of the workers support the capitalist system, and should not grumble when they get hurt by it. Anarchists and Socialists have for many years exposed the misery and waste caused by Capitalism, but the individual worker always thinks he will be one of those lucky ones who scramble out of the bottom class. The ex-service men probably believed all the pretty speeches of the politicians about the beautiful new world after the war, but this was merely the bait for the trap of conscription, in which they were caught. Now, although they have helped to add another million or two square miles to the British Empire, they have handed it all over to their masters and have not a single square foot on which to grow food for themselves. Instead of seizing town halls and libraries, they should unite with the rest of the workers and take the land that is necessary for men and women to lead a free and full life. That, of course, implies a Social Revolution. But it is the only way out.

The Triumphs of "Diplomacy."

When people high up in the official world write their memoirs we sometimes catch a glimpse of the workings of the machinery of the State, that bureaucratic monster which dominates our lives to-day. The *Daily Telegraph* has recently been publishing the memoirs of Count Witte, who was a noted Minister of Finance in Russia under the old regime. He states that in 1898 the Russian Government demanded great territorial "concessions"

from China, including Port Arthur and the Kwantung Peninsula, without any compensation. The Chinese Government naturally was reluctant to comply with these demands, as also was the Empress Regent. But Count Witte, who had charge of the negotiations, was equal to the occasion. He writes:—

"Seeing that, under the circumstances, should we fail to reach an agreement with China, bloodshed was likely to take place, I wired to the agent of my Ministry in Peking to see Li-Hung-Chang and Chang-Ing-Huan, another high official, and to advise them in my name to come to terms with us. I instructed the agent to offer these two statesmen valuable presents amounting to 500,000 and 250,000 roubles respectively. . . . Largely under the influence of the fact that a number of our warships, cleared for action, lay off Port Arthur, the two statesmen went to the Empress intent on persuading her to yield. Finally the Empress consented to sign the agreement."

This concession bought on the Japanese War, which led to the Revolution of 1905, so it turned out a very bad bargain for the Russian Government.

Malatesta Still in Prison.

The reaction from the recent revolutionary uprisings is apparently still in full swing. *Umanità Nova*, the Anarchist daily of Milan, sums up as follows the police persecutions of which it has been the victim: "In the first place, the arrest of all the editors and of Errico Malatesta. Then the sequestration of all our books and records, and now the seizure at the post office of all our correspondence and remittances." It reprints a short speech that Malatesta made to certain factory workers in Milan shortly after the signing of the agreement made between the General Confederation of Labour and the employers' association. Malatesta said:—

"You who are celebrating as a great victory the signature in Rome of this agreement are deceiving yourselves. In reality the victory belongs to Giolitti, to the Government, and to the bourgeoisie, who find themselves saved from the precipice over which they had been hanging. . . . To speak of victory while the Rome agreement puts you back once more under the exploitation of the bourgeoisie, is a lie. If you give up possession of the factories, do so with the conviction that you have lost a great battle, and with the firm intention of resuming the struggle at the first opportunity and pursuing it to the end. You will then drive the employers from the factories, and you will not allow them to re-enter until they come in as workmen on an equality with yourselves, content to live by working for themselves and others. Nothing is lost provided you do not delude yourselves with the fallacy that you have gained a victory. The famous decree as to the control of the factories is to dupe you, for it will tend to the creation of a new class of employees, who, though sprung from your bosom, will not defend your interests but the new situation created for them, and it will tend also to harmonise your interests with those of the bourgeoisie—the interests of the wolf with those of the lamb. Do not believe those of your leaders who mock you by putting off the revolution from day to day. The revolution! You yourselves have to make it whenever the opportunity presents itself, without waiting for orders that never come, or, if they do come, only instruct you to give up the fight. Have confidence in yourselves, have faith in your future, and you will conquer."

To us, surfeited with the vainglorious boastings with which Labour leaders habitually celebrate their surrenders, that short speech comes as a gust of pure sea air sweeping into a charnel house.

Malatesta is still in the hospital ward of a Milan prison, where he is kept in strict seclusion and not allowed to communicate with anyone. But on November 28 *Umanità Nova* printed a message from him which had been written on the 16th and smuggled out of the prison: "I am ill, and here it is not possible to recover in a rational way; but don't be alarmed, let us hope that it will pass." The "plot" with which he and his comrades are charged is breaking down; but the Government will not let them go, for its intention is to shatter their health by months of detention in prison. Protests are heard from all quarters, but something more drastic is necessary if the workers wish for their release.

GOD OR FREEDOM?

(A speech delivered by Michael Bakunin at the Congress of the League of Peace and Freedom, at Berne, in 1868.)

It has been asserted that we are enemies of free opinion, because we combat all religious ideas; but this assertion is in every respect unfounded. We are the systematic and principled enemies of every authority, of every governing force; we even combat the authoritarian State idea, and we will never recognise any social organisation which is not founded on the freedom of the whole of mankind.

We love freedom so much that we respect the outlook and opinions of everyone, even if they are in direct antagonism to ours. Has not one of the speakers on this platform asserted that Christianity is the foundation of all morality? We have listened to him quietly, and the same tolerance we demand also for ourselves, so as to express our deepest conviction that not only Christianity, but every other religion, whatever its name, is the direct contradiction of all human morality.

We do not combat religion just as if it were a mere caprice of ours; no, we combat it in the name of morality, justice, and humanity, and we are convinced that these principles will never be realised in society as long as mankind will be influenced by religious Utopias and superstition.

This deep and true thought, that religion is in its whole character an enemy of all human morality, dignity, and justice, was not first proclaimed by us. The great thinkers of the past century had already developed it. This thought had already inspired the noblest spirits, the heroes and martyrs of the Renaissance, such men as Giordano Bruno, Vanini, Servetus, whom Calvin allowed to be burned alive at Geneva, and so many others who saw in the Christian darkness the light of the ancient Greek spirit, and who have unfurled the flag of Freedom and Humanity on the shattered towers of every God idea, of all despotisms.

This morning I have found on the table of our ante-room a prospectus which requests the delegates of our Congress to subscribe for a book which was written against the Popes. The motto on this work are the words of Ulrich von Hutten: "When mankind want to be free and happy, they must first of all destroy the chains of the Roman tyranny and free themselves of their heavy yoke, which corrupted monks and priests have placed on their shoulders." Who, then, was this Ulrich von Hutten, the hero of the Reformation? Was he a religious individual? Did he destroy the chains of the Catholic Church in order to submit to the pious Protestant tyranny of a Luther, a Calvin, or a Melancthon? No; Hutten was an atheist, a friend and scholar of the atheists in Florence, where he became acquainted with the great teachings of the Humanists.

These great heroes of Freethought, all the famous liberators of mankind, who were persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, burnt, or murdered in another way by the hangman, they all fell through the cruel tyranny of Kings and Popes, Church and State. But their ideas did not die. They were disguised under different names and forms, and advanced the gigantic work of the Humanists in the sixteenth century, and it was without doubt the learned and wise Erasmus of Rotterdam who was their most noted representative.

In the seventeenth century the spiritual direction was powerfully strengthened through the development of natural science. Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Gassendi, Bacon—the grandfather of modern Positivism—have built up the sciences on the foundation of reality, which sounded the death-knell of all metaphysical teachings, consequently also of religion. Out of the union of both these aspirations there has developed the great French philosophy of the eighteenth century.

This great eighteenth century, whose children we all are, and which inspires us even to-day with its powerful ideas, was really the most humane and atheistic century. It has acknowledged man and denied God. Their great spirits had comprehended that if there is a real desire to free mankind, break all its chains, and bring it happiness, dignity, and freedom, we must first of all destroy every religious Utopia, and all theological and metaphysical comprehensions, which have always been, since the dawn of human history, a means and a justification of all tyrants to demoralise, enslave, and exploit mankind. The philosophers of the eighteenth century were luckier than the great thinkers of the Renaissance. The time was ripe, and their energetic and passionate propaganda was the mother of the Revolution.

Shall I analyse here the causes which prevented the Great Revolution from developing all its aspirations! This would take us too far. I am content to mention the sentimentally terroristical, *i.e.*, the religious teaching of Jean Jaques Rousseau, which was simply a hindrance to the general spiritual harmony of the eighteenth century, and which was supported by the inconsequent, brutal, and narrow-spirited Theism of Voltaire, who was of the opinion that for the people, the *canaille*, religion is an absolute necessity. I am

merely mentioning that this teaching had during the Revolution united the abstract culture of God with the abstract culture of the State. Both these metaphysical aspirations, which were embodied in the dark figure of Robespierre, the Calvin of the Revolution, had killed the Revolution.

After that there began the Dictatorship of the First Empire and the union with the Church, due to the principle of utility—useful, it is understood, to the Despotism; then there came the Restoration with its Romanist decay and their representatives—the Chateaubriands, the Lamartines, and the Schlegels; and lastly, the speculative philosophy of the Germans, which, under the name of Eclecticism, has become a State institution in France.

These are the deep causes of the present situation, from which it is so difficult to escape. But if we really want to save ourselves, we must openly and freely unfurl the flag of the Renaissance and of the Great Revolution, on which is written "The Revolt of Man against the Yoke of the Gods."

Let us, then, have the courage to declare openly and freely that the existence of a God does not allow the union of happiness, dignity, reason, and freedom of mankind. If God exists, then is my reason, strong as it is, my will, with all its energy, as nothing compared with the Godly will and the Godly reason. My truth is to him a lie; my will becomes powerless; my liberty and my rebellion mean sinning against him. It is he or I. If God exists, then must I disappear; and when he is so gracious as to send his prophets to make his truth known to me, which my reason cannot comprehend; when he sends priests to guide my thoughts, who are themselves incapable of differentiating between good and evil; when he sends anointed kings to govern me, then must I submit to his will with a slavish obedience. Whoever wants God desires also the enslavement of humanity; either God and the enslavement of mankind, or human liberty and the annihilation of every God idea! There is no third way! The decision rests with you.

This deep truth, which many greatly fear to proclaim openly, this truth, that the existence of a God does not allow the union of human liberty and reason with the individual and social morality of mankind, is acknowledged by many delegates of our Congress who for various reasons vote with the majority, to whom we are opposed. Has not a member of the moderate section declared plainly that the development of the positive sciences must unconditionally call for the gradual annihilation of all religious dogmas; and therefore education is the best means for the spiritual, political, moral, and social emancipation of the masses?

We, too, are supporters of a good and general education. We are also of the opinion that all the sciences with the highest and most profound phenomena must become the spiritual property of the people. But in order that the people may be able to learn, they must first of all have the leisure and possibilities to study; they must be able to keep their children during the time of their studies. But this in itself demands the need for a radical change in the present economic organisation of society.

And this is not all. The partisans of a peaceful revolution, all these freethinking associations, who have led themselves to believe that only through instruction, the spoken and written propaganda, will they succeed in annihilating the power of religious superstition, they all make the greatest mistake. Religion is not only a spiritual obscuration of the mind, but it is also at the same time a passionate and constant protest of all human sentiments and inner aspirations against the narrowness and poverty of daily existence. The human imagination creates an artistic world, and there is planted its whole longings, all the hopes and ideals of mankind. Men have made richer the heavens because they have through that impoverished the earth. Thus was religion brought into existence, and it will be omnipotent on the earth as long as it dominates ignorance and injustice. Let us finally create justice and give to the earth that which belongs to it, namely, happiness and brotherhood! Let us destroy all institutions of injustice and tyranny, and establish a world of brotherly love, that is, a world where the equal rights of all are founded on the equal solidarity of all, where freedom will be the product of equality, and religion will no longer find a foundation in human society.

But in order to destroy religion and all godly reflections in the human imagination, which keep us enslaved and poverty-stricken, spiritual enlightenment is not sufficient—a Social Revolution is necessary!

Call off the Quacks.

Anarchism wants to call off the quacks, and give liberty, Nature's great cure-all, a chance to do its perfect work. Free access to the world of matter, abolishing land monopoly; free access to the world of mind, abolishing idea monopoly; free access to an untaxed and unprivileged market, abolishing tariff monopoly and money monopoly,—secure these and all the rest shall be added unto you. For liberty is the remedy of every social evil, and to Anarchy the world must look at last for any enduring guarantee of social order.—B. R. Tucker.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

France.

Study of the French revolutionary press during the past month shows us a tossing sea of acrimonious debate, in which Majority and Minority Syndicalists, Pro-Bolshevist and Anti-Bolshevist Socialists, State worshippers and Anarchists assail one another with increasing vigour. This, of course, is the inevitable result of strikes that have broken down and other futile attempts to get rid of an environment that is becoming more and more intolerable. With the fall of the franc, the increase of rents, added taxation, consequent rises in the price of the necessities of life, and all the pitiable aftermath of military victory, the pinch grows unendurable. The situation, governed by causes essentially general in character, has passed far beyond the grasp of revolutionary Syndicalists, who think only in terms of the workshops, or the Parliamentary Socialists, whose one idea is to patch up the unpatchable with another law.

The Congress of Orleans seems to have been, as *Les Temps Nouveaux*, usually most self-restrained in its criticisms, declares, little more than an exchange of insults between the Majority and the Minority factions; the first furious at having been thrown from power for refusal to declare a railway strike, the second attributing to the lukewarm support given by the old and more conservative leaders the collapse that came when ultimately the strike was called. But the minority faction, though it talks loudly of its sympathy with the Russian Revolution and its belief in the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, shows itself incapable of looking farther than State Socialism.

The conference called by the Socialists of the Department of the Seine, which practically includes all Paris, declared by a large majority for adherence to the Third International. Intense feeling appears to have marked the proceedings, and threats of personal violence are reported as having been made against Longuet and other old-time leaders. The chairman proposed that the decision should be ratified by a standing vote. "No!" shouted one of the minority; "Let us take it kneeling, with ropes round our necks."

As a result of these quarrels, the inevitable split has now taken place, Pressemane, Pierre Renaudel, Jean Longuet, and others of the older leaders having formed a "resistance committee" for the purpose of opposing "the feudalisation of the party by Bolshevism." They have issued a manifesto in which they declare that this question must be settled at the forthcoming Congress of the National Socialist Party, at Tours. Meanwhile the subject has been voted on at district Socialist Congresses held at Montpellier, Lille, and Roubaix. At the first two places the proposal to join the Third International was defeated, and at the last-named it was carried.

The chief Anarchist papers, such as *Le Libertaire* and *Les Temps Nouveaux*, will have none of this centralised, authoritarian Third International. The paper last named, writing before the conference, gave extracts from the motion in favour of adhesion. For example:—"The Party must be constituted in accordance with the principle of democratic centralisation (*sic*). The strictest discipline, accepted by all members, must rule. The party's organs must exercise an uncontested authority, based on the confidence the militants repose in them." It is then declared that Parliament, although "an essentially bourgeois machine," is fated "to disappear when the working class capture political power." Accordingly, it is stated, "the Communists enter Parliament not to perform an organic work but to unmask the proletariat's enemies, without fear of transgressing established regulations or incurring disciplinary punishments." All of which *Les Temps Nouveaux* denounces as a mass of political gabble. It is sad to think there are boobies who allow themselves to be caught with such claptrap!

We imagine that the situation in Paris is becoming acute, for we note a great outcry against the influx of refugees from Russia and the Near East. These unfortunate and most unwelcome strangers are said to number over 400,000, and they are accused of bringing the plague with them. We notice, by the way, the start of similar protests in London, and think it well within the bounds of probability that in both cities the bases for an anti-Semitic agitation are being laid.

Revolutionary activity in France finds the stubborn conservatism of the peasant a terrible stumbling-block. In Italy the peasant has shown himself revolutionary, for he is still badly exploited by the large feudal landowners; but it is not so in France. There he has achieved real economic independence, though of a poor, niggardly, and isolated type. He produces for his own wants, and is able to satisfy them, at the low standard to which he has reduced them, almost entirely by the labour of himself and his own family circle. Moreover, in many cases he has grown rich out of the war; and he is in the majority. The Socialist propaganda, confined as it is within the framework of the shop and factory, has never touched him. The Syndicalist propaganda has reached, at most, only the kitchen-gardener, the woodcutter, the vine-dresser, and the small tenant farmer—all essentially wage-workers. The Anarchists, whose thought is only now beginning to shake off the influences and traditions of the Socialist movement, out of which it

grew, have developed no comprehensive land programme. And this they will have to do. It is the need of the hour; for it is the well-considered opinion of many of our ablest investigators that the one man who has passed unscathed through the upheavals of the past six years is the peasant. Whatever may have been the catastrophic sufferings of the cities' helpless proletariat, the peasant is still there, faring much as he fared before the war, but in many countries—Russia probably is one of them—somewhat better off than in pre-war days. He is not fed on words. He has solid roots, planted in the greatest of all solidities—as land-owning aristocracies and modern captains of industry alike know well—the possession of natural resources; and from those roots even the iron hand of war has been unable to tear him.

This line of thought is being reproduced with increasing frequency in the Anarchist press. *Les Temps Nouveaux* is a conspicuous example. In short, it is self-evident that the land problem must be looked into carefully and thought out clearly. Obviously the rough and ready programme of "Go and take it!" will not do. That results only in the strongest and best equipped getting all the choicest properties, and sets up inequalities that are indefensible. This is what has taken place in Russia, as it used to take place in the United States when the Government opened up new reservations and allowed them to be scrambled for. From all over the country "Sooners," as they were called, gathered for the race, and those with the speediest teams or motors got the prizes.

Un, which has been endeavouring to bring about an international co-operation between those who believe, first and foremost, in individual liberty, publishes a manifesto in which it declares that the happiness of the individual can be alone recognised as the intelligible end of all activity, and liberty the general and all-powerful means to that end. Marcel Sauvage contributes a clear and sympathetic review of the life-work of Benjamin R. Tucker, whose "Instead of a Book" is being republished in the paper's columns.

Portugal.

Páginas Libres, published in Spain but with a circulation in Portugal also, publishes a succinct and encouraging report of the growth of the revolutionary movement in the latter country. It is represented as dating back only to the general strike of 1912, but prior to that there had been much Anarchist activity. The strike was suppressed remorselessly, 800 comrades being imprisoned, and an era of persecution followed. The outbreak of the European War revealed widespread opposition to the Government's programme of intervention, and again there was ruthless persecution. The bricklayers' strike in 1912 was a most formidable affair, for the strikers fought the troops who attempted to raid their headquarters. In 1919 the General Confederation of Labour was founded, and Syndicalism entered on a definitely revolutionary policy. The reviewer regards the movement as confined to two channels—Communism and Parliamentary Socialism. He considers Syndicalism an outgrowth from the former. The Russian Revolution led to the formation of the Portuguese Maximalist Federation, which has brought into existence the Communist Centre and makes the Dictatorship of the Proletariat the special object of its propaganda. It has been drawing somewhat apart from the regular Syndicalist movement, which is particularly strong in the Southern districts. Generous credit is accorded to the Young Syndicalists, represented as carrying on tenaciously a revolutionary propaganda in the teeth of rigorous suppression. The Socialists are almost exclusively a middle-class party.

Mexico.

According to *Gale's*, which has many good words for the present Government as being well disposed towards Labour, internal conditions are more peaceful than they have been for many years. Nevertheless, its November issue speaks, on the authority of Governmental figures, of 35,000 workers as being then on strike. It may be remarked here that a strike in Mexico is far from being a patient and long-suffering affair, the entire tendency being to get quick results. These strikes seem to have been usually successful. In the case of the Coahuila coal strike, in which 15,000 miners were involved and smelters employing about 100,000 more were about to close down, the Government took charge of the mines after the companies had refused to accept the settlement proposed by De la Huerta. In three instances the miners had seized the plants and run them on their own account. At Vera Cruz the Secretary of War, Calles, withdrew the troops who were protecting strike-breakers at the docks. *Gale's* regards intervention by the United States as more threatening than ever.

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The Lords of Misrule.

The great stores in the West End are now parading their most expensive foods and luxuries for Christmas, whilst many thousands of unemployed tramp the streets in search of a master who will give them work. The price of bread still remains at its highest level, whilst the farmers in the United States are burning their stocks of wheat because they cannot get the price that they demand for it. Lloyd George says "Europe is in rags," but the Government refuses to release its stocks of wool for fear its capitalist friends should lose their profits. Millions are starving in China whilst the Great Powers quarrel as to who shall lend her the money to build the railways by which the famine-stricken districts might have been relieved. The Press prints and reprints its hoary lies about Bolshevik atrocities whilst ignoring the house-burnings and the murders committed in Ireland by the infamous "Black and Tans," who are encouraged in their policy of "frightfulness" by the journalistic prostitutes who shed crocodile tears when the Germans used similar methods in Belgium.

Look where you will—India, Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, Thrace, Poland, Austria—wherever the rulers of the earth find any resistance to their plans, famine, plague, and fratricidal strife run riot. The Allies play hide-and-seek over the opening of trade with Russia, every day's delay meaning the death of thousands in that unhappy land either from starvation or typhus; and the American Red Cross burn all their stores in the Crimea to prevent them falling into the hands of the Bolsheviks.

The whole world seems one vast madhouse. Yet this is the boasted "civilisation" which millions were driven to their death to save. And the lords of misrule eat, drink, and sleep in comfort. At a meeting of his well-fed masters Lloyd George boasts of "the greatest Empire that history has ever known," and the oily vampires cheer him to the echo. The misery, the rottenness, and the corruption bred of Empire concern them not at all. What care they if millions die of starvation this winter! Their priests chant: "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

And the people—the poor, ignorant, servile people—what do they think about all these things? As a plain matter of truth they do not think about them at all—they only talk about them. They read the lies of the Press, of the pulpit, and of the politicians, and are apparently satisfied by the reflection that although things are bad here, they are worse elsewhere. The people are not encouraged to think, as thought is dangerous to rulers. Racing, prize fights, football, cricket, murders, divorce cases—all of these are boomed in the Press so that the people shall never think about anything that matters.

But the Labour movement—surely the Labour movement counts for something nowadays? We sincerely wish that we could agree, but a Labour movement that cannot even guarantee that every man, woman, and child of this mighty and fabulously wealthy Empire should have at least decent food, decent clothing, and decent housing proves itself to be a ghastly sham. The Labour movement and the Co-operative movement together comprise probably half the inhabitants of this country, and yet this Christmas at least a million men and women will be unemployed or working short time, and they and their dependants without the means to celebrate the festival of the Prince of Peace, about whom some Labour leaders drivel so much at their "pleasant Sunday afternoons." It is probable that the pagans from whom the Christians stole their Christmas festival were more certain of getting food and clothing than are the men and women who make up what is often termed the "great Labour movement" of to-day.

However, the very rottenness of present conditions is a sure

sign of a coming change. A man stricken with a mortal disease may prolong his life by taking drugs, but the day comes when they no longer have any effect, and the disease kills him. Capitalism is stricken with disease, and the war that was to prolong its existence will be the cause of its death. The world will rejoice when at last it is dead and buried. But the death of Capitalism will not necessarily mean the coming of freedom and well-being for all. A free society can be formed only by those who have free ideas and the strength to carry them out. The rulers of the world know that a change must come soon, and they are laying their plans to fool the people again and to fasten on them new chains in place of the old ones. We Anarchists have a hard task before us, and it must be tackled in earnest. We must show the people that they cannot obtain freedom from Governments, but must rely on their own strength to overthrow Government and monopoly of the land, on which our slavery is based. Let us work hard now, so that when the collapse of Capitalism comes the people will be ready for Anarchism and the freedom which it alone can bring. We can end the reign of the Lords of Misrule if we will but realise that they are responsible for the evils from which we suffer.

THE PRISON.

And I saw a jail lifting its grimy walls to heaven.

And they that passed by looked at it askance, for they said, "It is the abode of sin."

And to them the broad sky and all the earth was fair to look upon, for they saw early buds opening and heard the birds that had come back from the South, and they felt the sun which was new warming the hearts of beast and plant.

But within the prison, and behind its cold, thick buttresses, and its small, round, triple-barred windows, that looked like tunnels, they heard faint groanings and sighings and much lamentation, and they said, "It is most just, for it is the abode of sin."

And I heard a Voice saying, "Woe to the cause that hath not passed through a prison!"

* * *

And I looked again, and I saw in the jail those deliverers who in each age have saved the world from itself and set it free, and gyves were on their wrists and ankles.

And I saw Israel in the house of bondage before it came forth to preserve Duty for mankind.

Woe to the cause that hath not passed through a prison!

* * *

And I saw within the jail them that gave liberty to the slave, and them that unbound the mind of man, and them that led onward to Freedom and Justice and Love.

Woe to the cause that hath not passed through a prison!

* * *

And the hosts within held up their arms, and the marks of their shackles were upon them.

But I hid my hands behind me, for there was no mark on my wrist. Woe to the cause that hath not passed through a prison!

—Ernest Crosby.

WANTED—£100!

As a result of our appeal, money has come in much more freely during the past month; but we are still a long way off the amount we require. We hope that those who have not contributed will do so as soon as possible, for our work is limited by the amount of financial support we receive. We will send collecting sheets to any one who writes for them. The following amounts have been received up to December 9:—

Acknowledged last month, £7 19s. T. Foxall 2s. 6d., A. Bishop 2s. 6d., H. B. 10s. 3d., A. Smith 2s. 6d., R. Marquez £1, L. G. Wolfe £1, J. Sellar 2s., M. and T. S. 7s. 6d., W. Bond 4d., A. Rumbold 6s., H. G. Russell 2s. 6d., F. Goulding 3s. 6d., W. T. Shore £1, J. Brown 1s. 4d., G. Defendi 2s., A. St. J. Adcock 1s. 5d., S. W. Wong £1 2s. 6d., E. Michaels 1s., Bristol Freedom Group £1 10s., W. Benson 2s. 6d., E. and A. Cranham 6s., P. F. M. 1s., A. L. 1s. 2d., G. H. S. 1s., W. O. 1s., A. March 3s., F. J. 1s., A. M. 6d., W. S. 6d., F. H. A. 1s., W. Ponder 5s. 6d., G. Rosenzweig 2s., G. Senior 5s., Collected by West London Communist Group 6s. 6d., W. F. N. 2s. 6d., A. B. 6d., A. N. O. 6d., R. Black 5s., A. Black 1s., F. Black 1s., A. Johnstone 1s., C. Rooney 1s., D. Ross 1s., P. Donnelly 1s., J. Ruthven 1s., Sukenick 1s., Jack 6d., H. L. 1s., A. R. 1s., A. L. 3d., A. Gilbert 1s., Israels 1s., Spiez 6d., A. F. 1s., A. Corum 5s., Eulogio and N. Duenas 4s. 3d., Gateshead Sympathisers £1, C. E. Miller 2s., Club Volonta (Richmond, Calif.) £6 5s. 6d., E. Ratcliffe 5s., J. A. Osborne £1, R. J. Davey 5s., J. S. 3s. 3d., L. Sabelinsky 7s. 6d., Anon £1 10s. Total £29 5s. 9d.

ANARCHISM AND BOLSHEVISM.

Honesty demands that Anarchists declare plainly their attitude toward the Soviet Government of Russia. Lenin has been far franker. From the first he has declared that there can be no compromise between him, the champion of a dictatorship, and Anarchists, who believe that men should regulate all the affairs of life by free and mutual agreement. He, the strictest of Marxians, is a believer in centralised authority. We, on the other hand, have maintained for a century past that at the root of all the world's misery lies the special privilege granted to the few of ordering the lives of the many.

No one who has any acquaintance with Anarchist literature can deny that our position is as stated. Take, for example, Eltzbacher's "Anarchism," which we have circulated assiduously. Eltzbacher, without intruding his own opinions, gives long strings of extracts from the writings of the seven Anarchist authors he selects as representative. Those authors differ profoundly on many questions, for Tolstoy, Bakunin and Kropotkin are Communists, whereas Proudhon, Godwin, Stirner and Tucker are Individualists. The one point on which they are in perfect accord is that the State, no matter what its form or temporary label, is an aggressive tyranny from which Man must, at any cost, emancipate himself. This conviction constitutes Anarchism's reason for existence as a movement; and the reason for the existence of the Socialist movement is that it looks to a future in which the State shall be the sole employer of labour and regulator of individual life.

These two philosophies are absolutely opposed. By no magic can you reconcile the Socialist, who believes that out of order established by the strong hand of authority liberty will come, and the Anarchist, who believes that out of increasing liberty order naturally evolves. Each, if he is sincere, will work for the triumph of his conviction; the Socialist seeking persistently to clothe the State with added functions and thereby increase its power, the Anarchist seeking persistently to shear it of its functions and thereby reduce it to a cipher.

These are the opposite directions in which Socialism and Anarchism respectively have moved, do move, and will continue to move, because they must. There is no sense in pretending to believe that a man who is moving North and one who is travelling South are going in the same direction. Strong and able minds always refuse to stoop to such dissimulation. For instance, Herbert Spencer laid it down as axiomatic that our emergence from barbarism can be measured by the extent to which we have shaken off subservience to the State and substituted mutual agreement for authority imposed from above. He considered that the State omnipotence contemplated by Socialism would be a greater misfortune to our race than all the wars, famines and pestilences recorded by history. For my own poor self, and speaking as, at least, a conscientious student, I agree with Spencer. Thirty-five years ago I found it impossible to refute the proofs he had accumulated, and time has cemented that conviction. I know of nothing so corrupt as politics, especially in the democratic stage it has reached in the United States. I know of no method of administration so rotten and honeycombed with bribery as State administration. I know of no scheme of education so stupid and no justice so coldly unjust as that which the State metes out. And I look round me at this war-racked world, running with blood, and see a civilisation dying—slaughtered by the State. The great Powers, who have been dividing up this globe among themselves and crushing remorselessly their weaker rivals, are by far the greatest curses mankind has known. Socialism, with its all-government philosophy, has brought them to their present stature. They are its natural children and for them it is responsible.

This being my own confirmed opinion, it is self-evident that Lenin and I could not agree. Lenin is a State Socialist of the most rigid type. He has the great merit of being perfectly frank about it, and he has even expressed himself as an open admirer of the late Daniel De Leon, of New York City. I have no wish to libel the dead, but it is the simple truth to say that if ever there was a Socialist leader who hated Anarchists as the Devil is said to hate holy water, that leader was Daniel De Leon.

Within three short years Lenin has established a dictatorship more absolute than any civilisation has known since the days of the French Jacobins, a hundred and twenty years ago. So far as I can ascertain from careful study of the best evidence obtainable, his dictatorship is more absolute, more ruthless, and more incompetent. And it is to be noticed with admiration that Lenin is always loyal to the Jacobin, or State Socialist creed, and courageously outspoken in defence of it. Refer, for example, to "The Proletarian Revolution in Russia," which is a collection of articles and speeches by Lenin and Trotsky, and you will find him saying (p. 270): "It was only the dictatorship of the Jacobins that gave the French Revolution its present importance; that made it the 'Great Revolution.'" And again (p. 395): "A dictatorship is an iron rule, with revolutionary daring, and swift and merciless in the suppression of the exploiters as well as of the hooligans. And our rule is too mild, quite frequently resembling jam rather than iron."

Unquestionably the so-called Soviet Government, from the moment it attained power as the result of the second Revolution of November 7, 1917, had to fight desperately for its very life. It was subjected to a rigorous blockade; an attempt to subdue the Russian people by starvation which I myself, whether I view it from the standpoint of policy or

from that of elementary humanity, have always regarded as alike profoundly stupid and unspeakably ferocious. All the forces of the existing capitalistic system were necessarily arrayed against it, and it had also to face bitter internal foes. These consisted of, according to the classification made by Lenin himself early in April, 1917: (1) "The feudal landowners and the more backward sections of the bourgeoisie"; (2) the Cadets or Constitutional Democratic Party, representing "the mass of the bourgeoisie, that is the capitalists, and those who have the industrial bourgeois ideology"; (3) the Social Revolutionists and Mensheviks, representing "small entrepreneurs, small and middle-class proprietors, small and more or less well-to-do peasants, *petite bourgeoisie*, as well as those workers who have submitted to a bourgeois point of view." As against all these Lenin ranged his own Communist Party, the Bolsheviks, whom he defined, in the classification from which I am quoting, as "class-conscious workers, day labourers, and the poorest classes of peasantry, who are classed with the proletariat (semi-proletariat)."

No one who studies these speeches and articles can fail to notice Lenin's love of putting men and women—at whose actual mentality surely he can only guess—in set categories, and his habit of settling intricate problems by citing Marx, Engels, the French Revolution or the Revolution of 1848, as he himself construes those bewildering events. To me, at least, no method could be more unsatisfactory, and I regard it as now proved definitely that Marx and Engels, far from being infallibilities, were among the worst of prophets. They foretold, for instance, the automatic disappearance of the middle class and declared dogmatically that the inevitable Revolution would break out first in the most industrially developed countries and spread thence to those more backward. On those two predictions Socialism based its tactics for fully half a century, and time has proved both predictions false. The middle class has increased enormously in numbers, wealth, and influence since the "Communist Manifesto" was written in 1847. Meanwhile, two revolutions against Capitalism have broken out and still are raging. They broke out in Mexico and Russia, both backward countries.

Now, the Social Revolutionists and the Mensheviks were Socialists, though not of the Lenin type. Among them were the men and women who had sacrificed themselves unstintingly in the revolution of 1905. It is characteristic of the frankness I admire in Lenin that he acknowledges that revolution as having made the one of March, 1917, possible. He calls the revolutionists of that earlier date "the first among peers," and says that without the first struggle "the second revolution could not possibly have had the rapid progress indicated in the fact that its *first phase*, the overthrow of Tsarism, is accomplished in a few days." Yet it was on the Social Revolutionists and Mensheviks that Lenin opened all his batteries from the very moment when Tsardom was overthrown.

Necessarily there was internal strife, and this, coupled with powerful external attack, threw the door wide open to terrorism and reprisals of the most frightful nature. On those I do not dwell. War is war; huge omelettes cannot be made without the breaking of innumerable eggs, and we must allow a very ample margin for wildly exaggerated and deliberately false reports. Nevertheless, I believe that within three short years the "dictatorship of the proletariat" has become a personal dictatorship of the most decided type. Surely the terms dictated from Moscow in the matter of the Third International testified to an intensely autocratic psychology, and what is one to make of Lenin's recent statement that 15 per cent. of our population, if self-conscious Communists, could dominate this country?

H. G. Wells, who greatly favours Lenin, finds him at the Kremlin, guarded by phalanxes of soldiers. Of Trotsky, Bertrand Russell remarks that he stepped to the front of the Tsar's box at the Opera House in Moscow and "stood with folded arms while the house cheered itself hoarse. Then he spoke a few sentences, short and sharp, with military precision, winding up by calling for 'three cheers for our brave fellows at the front,' to which the audience responded as a London audience would have responded in the autumn of 1914." Russell tells us that "when a Russian Communist speaks of dictatorship, he means the word literally, but when he speaks of the proletariat, he means the word in a Pickwickian sense. He means the 'class-conscious' part of the proletariat, i.e., the Communist Party. He includes people by no means proletarian (such as Lenin and Tchicherin) who have the right opinions, and he excludes such wage-earners as have not the right opinions, whom he classifies as lackeys of the bourgeoisie."

Is the foregoing statement true? For my part I believe it is. It agrees with nearly all that I have read elsewhere, and is endorsed unhesitatingly by men whom I have cross-examined carefully and regard as competent to judge. Moreover the statement has the support of a body of evidence now so mountainous that it cannot all be false.

If the statement is true, two things follow. First, the cleavage is not along the economic line of the "class struggle," but along the line of political thought. To me that is always the true line of cleavage, my experience being that men of similar ideals can work together harmoniously for the end they have in common, however different their social and economic positions. Contrariwise, I have always found men of the same economic class fighting like cats and dogs when governed by differing ideals. Our ideas, as Heine says, take possession of us

and force us to fight like gladiators on their behalf; we do not pick them out of the air but have them thrust upon us by countless influences, of which our own personal economic interest is only one, and often by no means the strongest. In other words, the economic interpretation of history and the class struggle, as taught by Karl Marx, are not true.

Secondly, it is evident that, if we wish to use language accurately and thereby encourage accurate thought, we should speak not of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" but of "Dictatorship over the Proletariat by leaders of the Communist Party." The first expression is, to me, perniciously misleading, but the second would represent faithfully the actual fact.

It seems to me that Lenin is not a wilful party to this deception, and certainly the economic programme he has always urged is frankness itself. His first pronouncement on the land question was: "We must demand the nationalisation of all lands; that is, the surrender of all lands in the country to a central government department." A little later we find him saying: "We must improve and regulate the State monopolies (on grain, leather, etc.) which we have already established—and thereby prepare for the State monopolisation of foreign trade. . . . We are also extremely backward in the collection of taxes in general, and of wealth and income taxes in particular."

This, it will be observed, is no vague expression of a theory as to which opinions may differ widely. It is the President himself proclaiming the set programme of his Government, and it is a State Socialist programme of the most inflexible type. You distrust the State? You view with alarm the concentration of power in the hands of a governing minority? And you look on complacently at this! I find it most difficult to understand you.

If the Lenin régime should develop, as indeed it may, into a vast military bureaucracy, it would be, with the State Socialist programme it has adopted, an autocracy almost unlimited in power. Having at its free disposition the enormous natural resources of what was yesterday the Russian Empire, it could, and would, grant concessions and give away vast territories, which belong of right to the people and not to it, with all the insolence of a Caesar. It could, and would, bargain as despots bargain, and sell at its own price the lives and liberties of its own people, precisely as did Porfirio Diaz in Mexico. There are no limits to the power a Government so constituted could wield, and in the present dickering with United States financiers and our own Government one is perhaps witnessing the first hesitating step along that fatal road.

In a subsequent article I hope to indicate wherein and why the so-called Soviet Government of Russia has failed; and if my analysis prove wrong, no one will be more grateful to those who expose its errors than I myself shall be. For, to my thinking, the first necessity is to take down the shutters; to throw open the windows and let in light and air; to dissipate that atmosphere of lies in which we have stifled since the war broke out.

W. C. O.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ANARCHISTS AND DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—The division amongst Anarchists in their attitude towards a Proletarian Dictatorship (of which the Anarchist press of Europe gives ample evidence) must not be taken to indicate any falling away from principle on the part of those who regard such Dictatorship as a necessary evil during the transitional crisis. Being fully alive to the evils inherent in a Dictatorship, we are nevertheless obliged to recognise that wherever capitalist rule is overthrown before the workers are ready to reorganise upon an Anarchist basis of free co-operation, a Communist Dictatorship assuming power is preferable to the triumph of reactionaries. Where, as in Russia to-day, a Communist autocracy is holding off capitalist rule and its concomitant White Terror, we should, like our Russian comrades (*vide* Mrs. Snowden's "Through Bolshevik Russia") "do nothing to add to the difficulties of the Government."

This does not at all mean that we should cease the judicious propagation of our principles, much less that we should cease our endeavours to bring our own life into conformity with them. What he should do is for the individual Anarchist to decide—no one can decide that for him. Of course, "the powers that be" will never voluntarily submit to the least curtailment of their power, and many an Anarchist and pacifist, as in Russia to-day, must suffer imprisonment and death at the hands of the Dictators ere the world at last comes to guide its life by the libertarian principles of Anarchism.

Agreed, certainly, that we cannot associate ourselves with a Dictatorship and remain Anarchists; but, if we recognise, as we must, that a Communist autocracy, for the time being, stands as a bulwark against a worse thing; if Russia owes it to the Communist Dictatorship that reactionaries are not now rulers of Russia, then we must "give the devil his due." We do not cease to be Anarchists by recognising that autocratic Communist rule, with all its inevitable injustice, is yet the only safeguard against a greater evil.—Yours fraternally,

B. PLATTIN.

NEW WORK BY JOHN HENRY MACKAY.

Der Freiheitsucher. Von John Henry Mackay. (Berlin, 1920, xi., 260, gr. 8vo.) (The Freedom-seeker: the Psychology of a Life.)

This book by the author of "The Anarchists" (Revolutionary Life in London and Chicago in 1886-87) gives a résumé of a life's experience and ideas. Communist Anarchism is not recognised, and Tucker's system is proposed as a general remedy. But the book is also inspired by the very much broader spirit of Stirner, and contains mainly an impeachment of the State and Authority in all their forms. It is one of the works, very much wanted, which appeal to the general reader and open his eyes, if he has any, to see the nefariousness, arrogance, and impudence of "the State," or, rather, of those who call themselves the State and then live by preying upon their fellow-men and enslaving and exploiting them from cradle to grave.

This first edition (November) consists of 1,000 copies, numbered and signed, sold privately by the author at Berliner Strasse 166, Berlin-Charlottenburg. The present system—what the State has brought to ordinary human intercourse—is illustrated by the fact that not only are men numbered and passported now for an indefinite time, but every single copy of this or any other book sent abroad from Germany has to bear a costly individual permit of export on the wrapper. This raises the price to about 10s. a copy. N.

Discussions on Bolshevism.

Lively discussions took place at our meetings at Chandos Hall on November 23 and 30. Our comrade Wm. C. Owen opened each meeting with an outline of his position, and stated that the evidence now available showed that the Bolshevik Government was not a "Soviet" Government, as the Soviets had no longer any influence. The Communist Party was the sole fountain of power, and the people were no longer consulted. There was little liberty left, and it was a Dictatorship in fact as well as in name. Of course, Owen was severely heckled at question time, but he was able to answer every one even if he did not convince them. When discussion time came he was bitterly attacked for daring to criticise the gospel of Bolshevism, and was taunted with "playing the capitalists' game." Owen replied to all his opponents, and in summing up emphasised the Anarchist position, that the people must have free access to all natural resources, with organisation on the basis of voluntary agreement. It is impossible to give all the points raised, but sufficient to say that the discussions cleared away many misunderstandings of Anarchism, and to that extent the meetings were a success.

A fair quantity of literature was sold. There was a good audience on the first evening, but the rain kept many away on the 30th. We regret to say that the *Daily Herald* failed to publish our advertisements. On November 16 we paid for three advertisements, but only one of them appeared on the date promised, and the third one never appeared at all. They complain that advertisers are shy in using the columns of the *Herald*. Perhaps our experience explains matters.

NOTICES.

LONDON.—FREEDOM can be obtained from our comrade ESTHER ARCHER, Secondhand Bookshop, 68 Red Lion Street, Holborn, W.C. 1.

CARDIFF.—Our comrade A. BANKS, 1 Carmarthen Street, Market Road, Canton, Cardiff, stocks FREEDOM and all Anarchist publications, and is willing to supply groups and branches with advanced literature of all kinds. Comrades calling will be welcomed.

LEEDS.—G. FROST, 31 Windsor Street, York Road, stocks FREEDOM and all other Anarchist publications, and would be pleased to see comrades.

CASH RECEIVED (not otherwise acknowledged).

(November 10 to December 9.)

"FREEDOM" SUBSCRIPTIONS.—A. G. Barker, A. St. J. Adcock, J. Petrovich, S. W. Wong, W. Benson, J. Freedman, H. Weinberger, L. Kisluik, G. Zilboorg, R. Nathanson, C. Newlander, G. Senior, J. Coley, H. C. Thomas, J. D. Robertson, L. Sabelinsky.

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