

FREEDOM

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THE CHICAGO MARTYRS.

WHEN this number of *Freedom* appears, we shall be on the eve of an anniversary which every worker, every lover of liberty, ought to engrave in fiery letters on his heart. On November 11, 1887, five Anarchists who had been the most devoted champions of the workers' emancipation were put to death at Chicago, merely to give satisfaction to the capital-owners and labour-robbers of America, who loudly cried for their blood, hoping that that blood would extinguish the revolt of the labour-slaves.

On that day Parsons, Spies, Engel and Fischer were strangled on the scaffold by order of the middle class judges of Chicago. Lingg who was condemned to the same fate, deprived the bloodhounds of the pleasure of seeing his corpse, too, on the scaffold, and exploded in his mouth a small tube filled with explosive matter: while Schwab and Fielden were sent to endure one for 15 years and one for life, the horrid treatment of the American jails.

That day will be an historical date—not because five new martyrs were added to the already awfully long list of those who gave their lives for the sake of Freedom—but because it opens a new page in the history of the struggles of Humanity for its emancipation. Engel, Fischer, Lingg, Parsons and Spies, Schwab and Fielden, were *not* aiming at a political change in the institutions of the United States. What they struggled and died for, was a thorough change in the *economical* conditions; what they wished to overthrow was the yoke of Capital, not that of a despotic or tyrannical government.

Therefore the middle classes of America—all those, in fact, who live upon the sweat of the worker—had sworn to them so terrible a hatred. They knew, these rich people, that they could bring no distinct charge against any of those seven whose death they so loudly asked for. But the Anarchists had written and spoken against the tyranny of the idlers; they had called the workers to organise in order to dispossess the capitalists and to socialise capital and land; they had reconstituted the International Workmen's Association; they had declined all kinds of compromises in the war against Capital, and so they could be bribed neither by money nor by the attractions of position in the ruling classes. They were Anarchists, and their manly voices were listened to by the suffering masses. And that was enough: the hatred of the rich people towards these terrible foes knew no limits. For eighteen months they cried out in their papers and meetings: "Kill them! Let the workers know that the rope will be the appointed end of their leaders, whatever the part they may have directly taken in the movement. They are followed by the masses—they *must* die!"

We have witnessed many atrocities during the last ten years, when the struggle for liberty has taken so acute a character all over Europe, bringing some fifty or sixty men and women to the scaffold, while thousands have been condemned to a slow death in prisons or exile. We have grown accustomed to see tribunals denying the simplest forms of justice. But, apart from the case of Lisogub who was hanged in Russia for having given money to the Revolutionary Party, we never saw anything approaching the contempt of all established forms of justice which we saw at Chicago. Never such immense sums of money so freely spent by the rich in obtaining the desired sentence.

Now that so many witnesses have been heard, it is known that in fact the Anarchists were not the promoters of the eight-hour movement in America. Despising compromise, they refused to join it. But, when they saw that peaceful strikers—men, women and children—were clubbed and shot down like mad dogs, by the Chicago uniformed police and the private police of the rich capitalists of Chicago—the Pinkerton's men—they went to the meetings and tried to arouse among the workers the consciousness of their rights. It is proved, moreover, that when wild excitement followed in Chicago the butchery by which both the police of the State and the Capitalists tried to suppress the strike,

Parsons and Spies did their best to prevent a bloody conflict which would have led to the defeat of the workers. It is proved, on the other hand, that the chief of the Chicago police wished to have an armed conflict and thought "to make short work" of some 3000 Socialists if he only "could get them in a corner without their wives and children." It is known that owing to the efforts of Parsons, Spies and the others, the Haymarket meeting was of a peaceful character.

But that was not in the plans of the police. They rushed on the peaceful meeting, hoping to have now the opportunity of making "short work" which would crush the eight-hour movement, and then a bomb was thrown in their midst, killing a dozen of them and wounding another dozen. But it is known now that none of those who died on the scaffold had anything to do with the bomb: *the judges themselves recognised it.*

But what did it matter to them! They took seven men who were most prominent by their activity and their unlimited devotion to the cause of the people, and they said to them: "You were the soul of the movement and therefore you will be executed!"

A cry of indignation arose among the workers of America and Europe at this condemnation; and it would have been still more unanimous if it were believed that so wild a sentence could ever be carried out. Eighteen months had elapsed since May 1886, and the workers were sure that, passions being calmed by time, the capitalists of Chicago would never dare to execute the sentence which had been openly bought by the dollars of the Association of the rich labour-robbers of Chicago.

But the cowards had forgotten nothing. They had once trembled for their purses—now they cried for blood. In proportion as public opinion awakened and loudly demanded the withdrawal of the shameful sentence of death, the bloodhounds of the capitalist press yelled louder and louder. Never, never, saw we such a really cannibalistic spirit as that shown by the capitalist press of the States in October last. Take all history, search all its pages, you will find nothing like what we saw that time in America! Even during the excitement which followed the civil war of 1871 in France and the fall of the Paris Commune, the sight offered by the organs of the wealthy classes was less disgusting than that of the American capitalist press before the legal murder of November last. After having exhausted all imaginable and unimaginable means for maintaining the sentence of death, they wrote every day: "The death clothes are sewn for the Anarchists." . . . "The rope to hang them has been ordered. It has been handed over to the hangman." . . . "Experiments are made to ascertain its strength." Such was the news eagerly communicated day by day to the readers, in a prominent place, by all the leading papers of New York and Chicago. "The rope supports such a weight. It will do: the scoundrels will have become thinner when they know that they will be hanged." "Too much philanthropy in all that," added a middle-class joker; "they ought to be hung by a rope which would break twice or thrice." "How best to hang them? All at once? Or by twos? Whom first? Parsons and Spies? No; better Engel and Lingg first: Spies is nervous, better let him suffer while his friends will be suspended in space!" And so on, and so on every day!

True, the man coward is the most sanguinary of all beasts: the cannibal reappears under the modern frock-coat and evening dress of those who before had trembled for their smart clothes.

And all this was carefully brought under the notice of Spies and Fischer, Parsons and Schwab, Engels, Lingg and Fielden.

But they remained calm. Until the morning of the 11th they were writing letters and answering the numerous telegrams they were receiving. Priests, calling themselves Christians, annoyed them with their hypocritical words: they sent them away. Engels discussed Anarchy with his warder. Fischer told to another that he had dreamed of his father's house in Germany, and how he felt like a child again with all the freshness of childhood. They sang the "Marseillaise" while the

hangman made experiments with a new "scientific" trap on the scaffold.

And, when they were called for, they marched, quiet and firm, to their death.

"Men and women of America," began Parsons, but his voice was stifled by the white cap.

"This is the most beautiful moment of my life! Long live Anarchy!" exclaimed Fischer. Engels loudly cried: "Hurrah for Anarchy!" and Spies added:

"Our silence after death, comrades, will be more powerful than our voices during life!"

Yes, their voices loudly speak from the grave, and call the workers to continue the struggle for Freedom.

The courageous wife of Parsons, Lucy Parsons, has come to England and will cheer English workers in their struggle for the emancipation of mankind.

WORK AND ORGANISATION.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

(A Paper read by Dr. Merlino at the October Freedom Discussion Meeting.)

WE now enter upon the crucial point of all socialistic systems—the Organisation of Labour—the great problem with which we shall be confronted at the breakdown of the capitalistic system. We will first take a general view of what the future organisation of labour may be.

If we allow a central government, or any authority whatever, to exist and regulate our affairs, we have no natural but an artificial system of production and distribution enforced, a system which will be held by the men who profit by it, as consented to by all members of society, irrevocable at least for a time, and vesting rights in themselves. These rights they will be by and by prone to defend even by force, under colour of assuring the "stability of society" (another name for law and order) against changes demanded by the very class who will be made to support the whole weight of the system, of which the requirements of the central government or administration will form not the lesser part.

But how can we bind our future, when we have no definite idea of what our situation, our wants, our feelings will be? We should sell our birth-right blindly. One thing only is certain; and that is, that this government or administration would be an enormous and therefore also a very powerful one. Progress can never thrive under such a nightmare; it can but plough its way once more through revolution. We must therefore strive for the right to pacific and untrammelled progress—for the right to find the best social system. This is a most precious right—a right which has said to have been acquired long since as political freedom, but which has been really enfeebled and suppressed under the ever growing tyranny of the parliamentary system. In the development of society, the free-handed policy is a sheer necessity. No young man beginning his career would pledge his future life to the will and direction of any individual or body of men, however wise they were reputed, and yet it is proposed that society, as it emerges from the next revolution, should elect a body of politicians and let them act as her representatives, then fold her arms in blind confidence. Surely we must dismiss any such idea as hopeless and reactionary.

Of course the usual objection will here be made. It will be urged how, failing the wisdom of a central government, the workers can organise labour for themselves? who will be their guides in the immense and complex task they will have to accomplish? These will be the guides—*reason and a common interest*. People will begin to exercise their reason and to trust in it far more than they have hitherto done. They will learn the arts of life, of labour, as well as hygiene. A man must know how to preserve and further his health, and he must be the sole director of his own labour. Those two principles are in close correlation. Is it credible that alimentation, the most important function of animal life, should be secured in excess for the idle few and the workers be denied? Here is a man idle in luxury, useless to himself and to society, and yet this man eats perhaps six times a day, and his food is the most luxurious and the most delicate. Here is a workman slowly starving on insufficient diet. But by a cruel paradox the workman must give in work what he has not got in nutrition. No wonder then that there is always a deficit in his animal budget. We see children half famished, growing up weak men; then, the weaker they are, the harder is the work. These are the irrationalities of the present system, causing an enormous waste of forces in the shape of premature death, inefficient labour, diseases and crime. Now if we were the rational animals we boast to be, we should not permit this to go on to our hurt. We should understand the necessity of adjusting food to work—of feeding everybody according to his needs—that is, according to the labour he contributes to society, because the more a man works the more he requires food, and even the different quality of the work differentiates the qualities of nourishment required. This point is so important that we must dwell on it a little longer. Do we realise the harm done to workmen by insufficient nourishment? We know both from experience and from theory that insufficiency or badness of food have just the same effects as absolute inanition; the process although slower is the same, and the result is the same when the organism has been reduced to the same conditions. The only difference consists in the intensity and duration of the phenomena preceding death; for death occurs when the body has lost four tenths of its original weight.

On the other side we know equally well the evils of food in immoderate

quantities. Over-feeding is a kind of drunkenness, which inspires men with egoism and causes them to lose the sentiment of right and justice, and even of humanity, only to satisfy their greedy appetite for material enjoyments, in which they grow insatiable. We also know the effect of work on the quantity and even the quality of the food required. Diminution of food may be sustained without great evil in a state of relative rest, as in prison, and is compensated then by the diminution in the expenses of the organism. But the quantity of food becomes a highly important question for men who lead a very active life and are called to execute hard work. Thus in the Crimean war the English soldiers who in time of peace received 16 ounces of bread or 12 of biscuit and 16 of meat, were served with double rations beside rice, sugar, coffee and spirits. The very few cases of illness in the American army during the War of Secession and the unusually large number of recoveries from wounds were attributed to the excellent food supplied. The influence of diet on the capacity for work is illustrated by a comparison of the quantity of work done by French and English workmen in 1841, on a railway from Paris to Rouen. The French workmen executed but two-thirds of the work of Englishmen. It was surmised that this difference was caused from the more substantial food of the Englishmen, and the justice of this theory was proved. When the French workmen were treated to an equal régime they carried out an equal quantity of work (Longet, 'Traité de Physiologie,' Paris 1861, tom. 1, p. 897).

Now we may apply the same reasoning to another important problem of social organisation, that of house room. Here also science supplies us with necessary data. We are told by physiologists that the volume of oxygen absorbed by the lungs is five per cent, or the twentieth part of the volume of the air drawn in by respiration (Milne Edwards, 'Physiologie,' tom. 2, p. 510). Assuming that the average respirations per minute are 18, and that with each breath 20 cubic inches of air are changed, 15 cubic feet of oxygen are consumed in the 24 hours, which represents 300 cubic feet of pure air. This is a minimum quantity, not allowing for any augmentation in the intensity of the respiratory processes, which may take place from different causes. To meet the requirements of the system it has been found necessary in hospitals, prisons, etc., to allow at least 800 cubic feet of air for each person, unless the situation is such that the air is changed with unusual frequency. For, beside the actual loss of oxygen in the air exhaled, constant emanations from both the pulmonary and cutaneous surfaces are taking place, which must be removed. In some institutions as much as 2500 cubic feet of air are allowed to each person (Longet, 'Traité de Physiologie,' tom. 1, p. 526). We have here some data for deciding the size of our future houses, workshops, recreation grounds, music-halls, and so on. For all these we must have; and care will be taken that nothing which may contribute to the well-being of the workers shall be missing.

It is necessary to realise what a revolution these requirements will bring in the organisation of labour; what an immense amount of work now employed to amuse social parasites, and often really to endanger the lives of millions of men, will be spared; and what comfort will accrue to the workman. How the old order will be changed! Whole towns will be pulled down, there being no more capitalists interested in making 20 per cent profit out of the horrible dungeons let for abodes to the poor; no model lodging-house company whose manager says to an unfortunate woman like Annie Chapman, go and find the money for your rent or we shall turn you out. No sweaters, no big stores, no landlord monopolists, no merchants, no bankers or financial speculators to raise rents and to make to-day a famine, to-morrow an abundance, in order to gain by difference of prices. We will have nothing of the sort, nothing of the enterprising ability, so much prized by the economists of the capitalistic class; no more of these numberless middle men who work hard at nothing but to enrich themselves. All this will be changed. All the useless toil and turmoil of the present economic system will be converted into good and useful work. Workshops will be no more, like the old prisons, hells on earth. There will be no longer houses for the poor, and palaces, Belgravian squares and dens adjoining; everywhere will be abodes fit for human beings. The beauties of nature will be open to the workman, no longer mewed up in darkness and filth.

But now to the question of production. We can hardly realise the greatness of the changes involved, for we hardly realise the extent to which the cupidity of capitalism, the profit race, the adulteration system and the advertising system pervert the natural ways and means of production. Production instead of being regulated by the wants of the producers, takes its direction from the interest of a third person, the capitalist, who only cares for profit. The consumer as well as the producer, are at the capitalist's mercy. We, the producers on the one hand, are made to work against our inclinations, in inverse ratio, as it were, to our forces, and under slave-like conditions; on the other hand we are made to consume what is left after the capitalist has satisfied himself, anything rotting in the shops, anything the speculator has found convenient to bring over from some distant place, in exchange for what we have produced ourselves. We are deprived of what our soil could produce. Why? Because it may not be the interest of our all-powerful capitalists that it be produced at all. Our cities, our towns, our public buildings, etc., are made altogether for the benefit of the capitalistic class. Who ever enquires of a workman how he would prefer to live? or where? He is lodged where it pleases his master, far away from the fashionable districts, in the same way as the barbarians are driven far from the territory that civilisation invades. The workman is cheaply fed and clothed; but the cheapness is only in name. He has to pay twice over for everything. Usury feeds itself on his very blood, whilst it takes for the upper ten of society the milder form of credit. All this is good in the eyes of the economists, because the principle of "free

trade" is safe. The starving man transacts his poor business with the greedy capitalist; and if the nut in struggle with the stone gets broken, the fault lies obviously with the nut.

In fact, existing society is just the reverse of a rational one. You must leave at the door your reason on entering; as in Dante's 'Inferno' souls coming to hell leave hope behind. Every time you attempt to use your reason on existing social facts, you are baffled by the contradictions and anomalies you discover.

One of the most important changes which will be brought about in the organisation of labour when we advance through revolution to a society in accordance with reason, will be that we shall redeem agriculture, the mother of all arts, from the degraded state in which it has fallen. The decadence of agriculture is the most marked feature of the capitalistic reign. Take the following as to France from a writer in the *Revue Socialiste*, June 1888, Mr. Toubeau. The figures he gives us are highly interesting. Whoever opens the volume of the Agricultural Inquiry (*Statistique décennale de 1882*) is struck at the first glance by the immense extent of land withdrawn from cultivation and given up either to entire neglect as fallow ground or only sparsely cultivated. This amounts to no less than three quarters of all woods and forests, of all meadows, pasture-grounds, and soil formerly cultivated. Of fifty millions of hectares, which if in the hands of cultivators would be covered with rich crops, some eight millions are unreclaimed, though capable of cultivation. Of course without mentioning the really barren parts of the soil, such as rocks, glaciers, the summits of mountains, etc.

To these eight million hectares of uncultivated soil we must make some additions. There are in France 9,455,225 hectares of woods and forests. Of these not less than six millions are little if at all cultivated, full of dead wood, bushes, brambles, destructive animals; without roads, untouched by the labour and industry of man, but exclusively confined to the preservation of game for shooting and hunting. These six millions of hectares could be restored to agriculture without diminishing to any extent the supply of wood; this supply could be even increased, if the remaining three millions and half hectares were better cultivated and were provided with good roads.

In short, the uncultivated or partially cultivated soil amounts to eighteen millions of hectares, more than the third part of France itself.

Now to this enormous figure we must add the soil which gives a quarter of a crop or a half because it is insufficiently manured or worked. This partial neglect of the soil spreads, according to statistics, over a considerable surface. Wheat gives as an average 18 hectolitres per hectare; which is a very low proportion, easily surpassed on even the worst land by good deep tilling and manuring.

Good cultivation gives easily 40 hectolitres a hectare. Even 60 and 70 hectolitres have been obtained, and this is not the highest figure possible. Now the minimum figure of 18 hectolitres, the actual average of French agriculture, is only surpassed in 31 departments. It is not even reached in 56 departments. This Mr. Toubeau holds to be because the soil does not receive sufficient care; that the number of hands employed to work it is not large enough; and that manure is scarce: 10 millions out of these 20 millions of hectares must really be considered as uncultivated.

In short, 27 millions of hectares, or more than half the soil of France, is according to the calculation of Mr. Toubeau, unredeemed. He then goes on to explain the causes: how the owner is interested in the unproductiveness of the soil; how he says to the peasant, "I shall keep the soil, not in order to cultivate it, but only that you may not cultivate it, lest you become your own master and cease to be my slave"; and so forth.

But here we must stop. Enough has been said to show the necessity for a great revolution in agriculture, compared to which even our political revolution, that is, our revolt against government and class rule, will fall into insignificance. Equal changes will be introduced in the breeding of cattle and in other agricultural work, and by-and-by in all industries. Industry indeed will become an appendage of agriculture, whilst now it is just the reverse; and not only the soil will be utilised, but water and every power in nature will be utilised ten-fold. Production will be redistributed and localised; it will answer to local needs and no more serve the greed of capitalists and speculators for their own enrichment. We shall no more hear of rings and syndicates in copper, salt, coffee, wheat, coal, and what not. The new world (because it will be, as Owen foresaw, a new world) will slide in a new groove. The man will be there, not the master or the serf, not the coercing or the coerced man, but the free and intelligent human being.

But who will undertake the organisation of labour? Will it be a government concern or the concern of the workmen themselves freely associated? Here we come back to the point from which we started. Will people go on without any knowledge of practical hygiene and let their daily life be settled by a council of doctors very little acquainted with the temperaments and needs of their numberless patients, or wait until they become ill, and then put themselves in the hands of those specialists, whose appearance at the death-bed of the sick man foreshadows that of death itself? In this case they will follow the advice of our Democratic friends and work for a Democratic Constitution and Parliament. If, however, they begin to understand that no man can take care of us so well as we can care for ourselves, that the best medicine and also the best protection for every wise man is found in following the advice of the Greek philosopher, "Know thyself," and, we may add, "Act for thyself," then they will no longer look for salvation in authority, but will trust to reason and to individual initiative, living a free life whilst fraternising together in a common brotherhood.

SONG OF REBELLION.

A VOICE FROM IRELAND.

Yes—tear down our homes! leave the hearthstone cold
As the hearts of you who have laid it bare;
And stone from stone let the walls be rolled,
And our home be one with the outer air.
Heap wrong on wrong! We have had to bear
More wrongs than ever our tongues can tell;
One right is left us—we still forbear,
O England, to use it—the right to rebel!

We have borne so much that a little more,
You think, may be borne by us unpaid?
And our backs must bow as they bowed before,
While on quivering flesh are the lashes laid?
O England, are you never afraid
Of us you have tortured so long and so well?
Do you never doubt which the Fates would aid
Of us or you—if we rose to rebel?

Do you never dream of a dark, wild hour,
When, goaded to madness by you, we may
Turn and repay what your alien power
Forced on us many a bitter day?
You sow your seed in your old bad way,
And the bloody harvest do not foretell;
Yet, what shall your harvest be, who shall say,
When our patience withers, and we rebel?

For all things end. We have patient been;
And a black, black record behind you lies
Of moans we have heard, of tears we have seen,
Of the dumb despair in our children's eyes.
Our sisters' sobbing, our mothers' sighs
These ring our quiescence its funeral knell;
Our patience is over and gone. Be wise,
Ere wisdom be vain, and your thralls rebel.

THE MORAL BASIS OF SOCIALISM.

(By a non-Anarchist correspondent.)*

THE above written title is that of an essay by Mr. Karl Pearson, to whose opinions on Socialism some reference was made in the October number of *Freedom*. The essay has for some time past been familiar to us in pamphlet form, and is re-issued in Mr. Pearson's recently published volume of contributions to 'The Ethic of Freethought.' Now that it is thus surrounded and buttressed by complementary dissertations, it is perhaps not unfair to give utterance to a dissatisfaction which will have been felt by a good many Socialists at the manner in which the promise of the title has been fulfilled, and to attempt some indication of what it is that is required for its fulfilment.

"Not from fear of hell," writes Mr. Pearson, "not from hope of heaven, from no love of a tortured man-god, but solely for the sake of the society of which I am a member, and the welfare of which is my welfare—for the sake of my fellow-men—I act morally, that is, socially. Positivism has recognised in a vague impracticable fashion this, the only possible basis of a rational morality; it places the progress of mankind in the centre of its creed, and venerates a personified Humanity. Socialism as a more practical faith teaches us that the *first duty* of man is to no general concept of Humanity but to the group of humans to which he belongs" (Positivism, as Mr. Pearson ought to know, teaches precisely the same) "and that man's veneration is due to the state which personifies that social group." I must protest in passing, that I, and I think most other people, are more disposed to venerate Humanity than the British Public, the county of London than the parish of Paddington, and that Mr. Pearson's distinction appears to me to tend towards the vestrifaction of religion. But, to quote further, "Corporate society—the State, not personified Humanity, becomes the centre of the Socialist's faith." . . . "Socialism demands of each individual service to Society incorporated in the State." . . . "The strength of the family tie . . . is disappearing. We must learn to replace it in time by respect for personified Society, by reverence for the State." Now it is not necessary to dissent from these propositions, which admit of quite unobjectionable interpretation, but if we subjoin to each of them the interrogatory "Why?" we shall have to complain that we find no clear answer in Mr. Pearson's essay or in its companions. And this is not giving us a moral basis, though it may leave us with a very good platform. Mr. Pearson does in fact sketch very ably the moral platform of Socialism, but presents its planks as unsupported dogmas. No one is likely to suspect him, thorough-going sensationalist as he claims to be, of inability to indicate the foundation of these dogmas on the actual basis of morality, but we regret the absence of such an exposition, more especially since it may rouse the ever watchful nostril of some fellow-empiricist to a suspicion that he smells, in such a sentence as the following, some kind of transcendental rat. "Socialistic principles insist primarily on the *moral need* that each individual according to his powers

* When our correspondent has dropped his opportunism and carried to its logical conclusion his belief in the self-satisfaction of the individual as the basis of morals, we think he will no longer style himself "non-Anarchist." If the Socialist party had accepted this principle so universally as he seems to imply, we should be far nearer the day of true freedom than at present.—[Ed.]

should work for the community." Perfectly true, but when, under the title of a "moral basis," such phrases as "first duty," "reverence for the State," "moral need," are used, we cannot help remembering that to many they will, without the absent explanation, merely recall the "stern daughter of the voice of God," or the "Categorical Imperative" of Kant.

The fact is that Socialism has no peculiar moral basis. It has a moral platform, or body of characteristic opinion as to what is good for the life of man, just as Judaism or Christianity had theirs; but its basis, or final criterion, of morals is not different from that of any other philosophy founded like itself "on the agnostic treatment of the super-sensuous," which ignores, that is, theology and metaphysics. This basis, or final criterion, is individual desire, and nothing else.

To the sensationalist, as Mr. Pearson in another essay points out, the primary fact perceptible in the universe is motion. Out of this we separate the notions of matter and force, the latter an attribute of the former, and alone indicating its existence. We may follow in legitimate imagination the evolution of life through increasingly complex combinations of matter accompanied by increasing specialisation in the nature of the forces manifested, through inorganic, vegetable, animal life, with no distinguishable boundary to check us, and their corresponding force-aspects of chemical energy, growth, the will to live, the desire of the individual recognised by his own understanding. It is the determination of the individual to live, and to live freely and fully, satisfying his own desire, that the empirical student of society recognises as its ultimate and elementary fact. All association, all the institutions of society are and must ever be the product of the action of individuals seeking an avenue to the attainment of this freedom.

What Mr. Pearson calls the "Ethic of Renunciation" is an attempt to shirk the problem of freedom by the extinction of desire. This is a kind of death, and the peoples who have been capable of accepting such a philosophy (as in the form of Buddhism) are individually enslaved and nationally unprogressive until some new accession of life shall stir them to break its chain. It is because the north-western races of Europe, and their descendants in America, have been full-blooded and strong, even to coarseness, that they have outstripped the more intellectual, but milder-tempered Hindoo.

The history of conventional morality is the history of the habits which individuals have judged conducive to the ensurance of their life and of such freedom as they found they could attain. In primitive society—the mere packing of individuals like wolves—the individual was strengthened in his struggle for bare existence, the pressure of the world upon him was lightened, by co-operation, and he could conceive and seek the satisfaction of new desires. From that period onward, and ever more as society grew to be in more respects the guarantee of freedom to the individual, acts destructive of or harmful to society have been resented by the individuals composing it as endangering their own small portion of liberty and comfort. Such acts are indirectly suicidal for their doer, as destroying the conditions of his own freedom, and penal legislation is, in theory, aimed at making them directly suicidal by entailing immediate punishment. Class morality and class legislation, it may be observed, enjoin or condemn only those actions and habits which affect the liberty of the individuals of the class.

For many thousand years the individual from his birth was taught that morality consisted in obeying the laws and conventions which he found established in his society. These obligations were imposed by the will of the gods. Among the chief reasons of the amazing success and influence of the Christian religion were its assertions that god was not external to man, but incarnate in him, that god was love, and that regenerate man was freed from the law, and his morality entirely independent thereof. The plain meaning of these assertions, freed from its theological setting is of permanent truth and value. From observation and experience Socialists infer that when once the institutions of society have been so adjusted that the individual can get, without fighting for it, nourishment and maintenance for his body and the leisure necessary to emancipate his mind from ignorance and darkness, his secondary desires will be of a kind which can only attain their satisfaction, or approach thereto, in a healthy and happy society, the desire of knowledge, the interests of social intercourse, the delight in literature, in art, in music, and generally enfolding these, the social instinct, love, the widest and most insatiable of all the passions of the individual.

These desires we say, spring up, when the first conditions of freedom are attained. These desires have created the civilisation and culture of the world, in spite of the class dominance and slavery still subsisting. Born into the tangle of our modern life, ignorant and weak and almost blind, the individual finds it laid upon him that he take up his manhood and go forward. If Society has shut him out from her workshops and her schools he will join that supplementary "society" the so-called "criminal class." If he is endowed with health and can avail himself of the social machinery for his own instruction and maintenance, he will probably become a good citizen. Between these two fates lie those of the diseased, the weakly, the unlucky and those displaced by competition in industry, who are all liable to be driven into habits and actions accounted immoral. Socialists, recognising that individual desire in a wholesome society will almost invariably find its highest satisfaction in social action, work to establish such conditions as shall remove from every child and every man the trammels of weakness and stupidity which now promote immoral actions.

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient." Only education in society can teach the individual what is most truly expedient for him. The Socialist "moral platform" will give him excellent rules for guidance in his non-age, but not until he acts socially for the satisfaction of his own individual desire, apart from any sense of duty or obligation, can he be in truth a free and moral agent. S. O.

FREEDOM DISCUSSION MEETINGS.

ON October 12 Dr. Merlino opened the meeting by reading a paper on "The Organisation of Labour." He dwelt upon the necessity of revising the whole system of the production of the necessities of life, and pointed out that if this was done by a government it would be an artificial organisation of labour, whereas in a period of the development of society a free-handed policy was a necessity. Of course the usual objection would be made to this opinion. It would be asked, How without a central government can the workmen organise themselves? What would be their guides? He replied, reason and interest. People would begin to use their reason and to trust in it more than they do at the present day. It was necessary that people should know something of hygiene and medicine to preserve their health, and the better people were informed on these matters the more healthy they were likely to be. In the same way people would acquire the necessary knowledge to organise their labour. Every individual should be himself the chief organiser of his own labour. Under Socialism the whole plan of production would be changed. We cannot realise the importance of this change. To-day production instead of being regulated by the wants of the producers, takes its direction from the capitalist who only cares for profits. We are made to work against our inclinations, we are deprived of what the soil produces, simply in the interest of the capitalist. The present system is just the reverse of a rational one, you leave your reason at the door on entering it. Every time you attempt to reason on social facts you are baffled by the contradictions you find in them. Capitalist society is against reason, reason is against capitalist society. Progress is a goal towards which reason every day brings us nearer. One of the most important changes that would take place in the organisation of labour would be in the treatment of the soil. Agriculture would be redeemed from the degraded state into which it has fallen. The decay of agriculture was the most marked feature of the capitalist régime. The revolution which would take place in connection with agriculture would be far greater even than the political revolution. Manufacture would be an adjunct of agriculture instead of the reverse.

In the course of the discussion Comrade Donald said that the majority of the inhabitants of this country were not in the habit of depending upon themselves to any extent whatever. Surely the agricultural labourers who were the most ignorant portion of our population, or the poor people in the East End, who only know one particular branch of industry, were not going to revolutionise the conditions of industry. He thought that if such talent had been latent in these people they would have organised themselves a very long time ago.

Mahon was of opinion that the central government in this country had been a distinct blessing during the present century because it had forced people to take sanitary precautions in their own towns which otherwise they would not have done and epidemics would have resulted.

Alf. Marsh thought that Donald in common with many Social Democrats, seemed to look upon the mass of people as being very low down and incapable of doing anything to regenerate their lives. Everything was to be done for them by a select few.

Kropotkin meant by the Revolution that the means of production should become the property of the producers themselves. In Whitechapel, for instance, the streets were badly lighted because the people felt that the place did not belong to them. He had witnessed in his life one great change, the liberation of the serfs in Russia. The serfs were considered as quite stupid fellows who would never be able to manage their affairs themselves. But some said, Give them their liberty and you will see that they will organise their labour on the land much better than we could organise it for them. It was very easy to make a law, but when it was applied to the various districts it was a failure. He would admit that initiative was missing to the people of Whitechapel, but we should favour initiative in every possible way and try to get people to act by themselves.

Mrs. Shaack mentioned the co-operative societies as an instance of self-organised and managed bodies.

Dr. Merlino in replying, said Anarchists did not say that people would immediately become very intelligent. What they said was that there was an obstacle in the way which prevented the people from organising themselves. We want to remove that obstacle, and when it is removed, they will begin to understand how to organise themselves and do it.

The next meeting will take place at 13 Farringdon Road, on Tuesday November 20, at 8.30 p.m., when the discussion on Free Communism and the Organisation of Labour will be opened by T. Pearson.

CHICAGO MARTYRS AND BLOODY SUNDAY.

MRS. PARSONS has accepted the invitation of the Commemoration Committee to speak at various meetings in London and the provinces during November.

On Saturday November 10, a Meat Tea will be provided at St. Paul's Café, St. Paul's Churchyard, at 7 p.m. Tickets 1s. 6d. Tickets after tea 6d. to hear an address to Mrs. Parsons and her reply. Cunningham Graham, M.P., will preside.

Meetings will be held on Sunday 11th at 11.30 a.m. in Regent's Park; at 3.30 p.m. in Hyde Park. On Monday 12th, at 7.30 p.m. in Store Street Hall. Chairman William Morris. Speakers: P. Kropotkin, F. Kitz, J. Blackwell, Trunk, Dr. Merlino, Cunningham Graham, and others.—J. Lane, Treasurer; W. B. Parker, Secretary, Commemoration Committee, office of Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C.

All communications to be addressed to The Editor of FREEDOM, Leaflet Press 19 Cursitor Street, E.C. Office hours, Mondays, 3 to 5 p.m. During these hours a member of the Freedom Group will always be at the office.

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