

Freedom

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PRISON REFORM.

The "revelations" about the very bad state of British prisons which have lately circulated in the press have now had their usual outcome, in the shape of a Blue Book and promises of "reform."

For the middle-class Briton who is firmly persuaded that everything British, from the Yorkshire shoddy to the Westminster shoddy, is perfection itself, the new Blue Book will certainly be a revelation. But to us, who have among ourselves a number of comrades acquainted with British prisons from the inside, the Blue Book is only a confirmation of what we have heard and said years since.

John Most, who knew well the prisons of so many States, had even formulated a law to the effect that these benevolent institutions—the prisons—grow worse and worse as one moves towards the West and hears more in the country about the benevolence due to our fellow men. From our Lancashire comrades, also, we knew what legislating M.P.s of course ignore, namely, that flogging goes on in prisons in the most shameful way for the slightest acts in which the authorities choose to see acts of rebellion. A window-pane or a mug broken from sheer despair, and the wards resound with the heart-breaking cries of the lashed victims.

We knew that. But even the self-contented citizen, who reads no Anarchist literature and never talks to Anarchists, might have learned from the yearly reports of the Howard Association that not farther back than three years ago a prisoner had been killed—simply killed—in an English prison by the warders; and that the jury, who had to pronounce a verdict of "accidental death" upon this case, lodged a vehement protest against the impossibility of getting at the truth, on account of the pressure exercised by the governor of the prison upon the witnesses—the warders themselves.

In short, every one who wished to *know* might have known, long before the appearance of the said Blue Book, that for cruelty of treatment the English prisons are the most wicked in all Europe. It will suffice to call attention to the allowance of only four visits a year, the treadmill, the picking of oakum, and that wicked little bit of torture which consists in compelling the convict to sleep for the first month on bare planks, and then on the plank and a mattress on alternate days, things which still prevail in these islands although they have long since disappeared elsewhere. The double stamp of the military brutes and the hypocritical parsons who govern the English prisons is deeply impressed upon them.

However, there is something new in the Blue Book. It contains just a slight touch of Anarchist poison. The learned judges and the learned parsons of this country begin, also, to come round to the conclusion that, contrary to their learned expectations, the prisons have not the deterring influence which they are supposed to exercise. In olden times, people were more frank than that. When they murdered a murderer, or imprisoned somebody who stood in their way, they frankly recognised that they acted on the principle of revenge. But our modern hypocrisy—awfully revengeful, but also very cunning at the same time—denies being ever inspired by such base passions as revenge. They *love* the men they hang or flog; and it is for the benefit of mankind, and to deter other people, that men, women, and even children are lovingly hanged (the philanthropic hangman disposing of them for £5 apiece), while others are lovingly sent to climb the treadmill. But, alas! they discover now that, in the face of facts which have become of common knowledge, it is impossible any longer to maintain that prisons exercise any deterrent influence.

It is a fact, indeed, in this country as everywhere in the world, that a young man, who has been sent to prison in his youth, will return to prison over and over again, and die one day in a jail; that one who enters a prison for a small offence is sure to return to prison for a much graver offence; that all over the world prisons are *universities of anti-social deeds*. There, much more than at liberty, all the worst schemes of murder have been planned.

A few years ago, one of us lectured all over England and Scotland expressly to prove these facts, and to explain them; the moral effect of prisons upon prisoners being to render the imprisoned man still less fit for the struggle which one has to fight in life against the owners of all riches; to destroy in him the little of will which he possessed on entering the prison; to awaken in him a still greater contempt of the current principles of ethics; and, materially, to put him as he comes out of jail into such conditions as to leave him no other course but to return to his former life. Were it not for the efforts of a small number of good men scattered over the country who endeavour to find suitable

occupations for discharged prisoners, and sometimes treat them as brothers,—women and men who *undo* the demoralising, energy-killing work of the prison,—were it not for them, the number of returns to prison, an alarming figure *now*, would be still greater.

This is what a few judges in this country have openly confessed, and this is the conclusion which must be drawn from the Report of the Prison Commission. "The prisons are *not* a means for diminishing criminality." This is what one may read all through the Blue Book, although few have the courage to openly acknowledge this fact.

But so it *must* be. If somebody assails, or kills, or robs another because he does not feel sufficiently closely united by social bonds with him, a prison can *not* awaken such feelings in him. Hatred to society, a growth of anti-social feelings for the wrong which society does to him, is the necessary outcome of his stay in a jail. He may not be a rebel against society when he comes out; but he always is a hater of this society and its "order."

Again, if somebody commits an anti-social deed, because he has not had enough of *will* to resist the desire of so doing, although he knew that what he was doing clashed with his previous ideals or desires,—the deprivation of liberty, the necessity of submitting during the prison years to someone else's will, must necessarily destroy in him the little amount of will which he previously possessed; he will become, even more than he was before, the toy of momentary passion and of occasional circumstances. To deprive one of *his will* is not a means of strengthening that will.

If one hates regular work because he is too anæmic for it (and scores of thousands are in this case), or because he is passionate and wishes for a more adventurous career than that of putting, all his life long, a bundle of bristles into a brush, or of polishing the point of a needle, or of carrying bales of cotton on board ships, or because he feels that he is robbed by others of the produce of his work, or simply because he has never known any sort of work well enough to like it,—what can a place where a man is deprived of his liberty, of his contact with the great world, of the social features that may render work pleasant, of the inducements of friendship and love,—deprived in short, of all that makes life worth living—what can such a place do but make him hate work even more than he ever did before he entered the walls of those stone sepulchres?

The prison, *because it is a prison*—a place where a man is deprived of his liberty—can *not* develop in man the social qualities which are necessary for living in societies: it destroys them.

And the prison—even if the philanthropic parsons and soldiers could have their own way and make of it a place of even more refined torture than it now is—can *not* act as a deterring influence, for the very simple reason that there is no torture which man could not grow to be accustomed to. Look at the man in China, who walks about and sleeps with a heavy oak plank, two feet square, on his neck; and you will be struck to see how he has grown accustomed to this torture. He carries about his plank as others carry about their illness, forgetting it for the petty details of daily life. And how many more support, year after year, the torture of overwork, misery and pain in the same way?

As to *deterring* men from crime, reason and experience equally prove it to be the most absurd presumption. All that can be done is, by making privileged idleness impossible, to render life in society and work in society a pleasure for all instead of a dreary burden; to promote higher ideals and, by bringing men into closer daily contact with each other in their work, their pleasures, their enjoyments and their social life, to *prevent* the very inclination towards anti-social deeds, which might grow in every one of us under certain conditions. So long as this does not exist anti-social acts will continue; but judges and prisons will only increase their number, as they have hitherto done.

AN ANARCHIST VIEW OF THE Legal Eight-Hour Day.

We have seen that as a *scientific* palliative, even to give the workers more leisure, an eight-hour day may not do what its advocates claim, since by the intensification of labor the workpeople may be as much physically exhausted in an eight-hour day as in a longer one. The hope of the workpeople that by the same means the demand will equal the supply and so absorb the unemployed, will not be fulfilled either. We have seen, too, that an eight-hour day is quite an arbitrary affair, far too long, and is only adopted as a political cry because its advocates believe it will be attained on account of it presenting so little difficulty

to the capitalists, and we have also called attention to the fact that those who put it forward have never shown how an universal eight-hour law could be successfully enforced,—even if, to stave off imminent social and industrial changes, it should be placed upon the statute book.

The attitude of the government, Parliament and other political bodies toward protective laws for Labor where the workpeople have no organisation of their own, and therefore require protection the most, has also been touched on, and attention drawn to those among the workers who, determined not to rely on political action, have won by their own efforts what the others only talked of. The efforts of the workers in America and Australia in a legislative direction were referred to as showing its futility.

Let us examine a little further the way the government acts in the matter of labor legislation; for, to the Anarchist, it matters not which party in the political scramble secures office the general policy is always the same. The popular idea, the theory always put forward is that the government should protect the weak against the strong, and the workpeople, through the pretence it makes of doing something for them, actually come to believe it. They do not see that the practice is and always must be the reverse, that it is the government protection of the strong—of their exploiters, of private property the result of the exploitation of their associated labor—that causes their misery and degradation, their long hours and scanty pay, and that *labor legislation is but the limitation of licence granted by governments to the exploiters of industry*. They do not grasp the hard, cold logic of the situation, nor know that the function—the sole function—of the government is to enforce the law through the control of the executive forces of the country, the police and soldiers, armed with all the resources of civilisation except those of reason, intelligence and morality; that the statute law it enforces is but the written expression of the predominant section in society at any given time, and that therefore, twist and turn it as we may, whatever we would like it to do or whatever we think it ought to do, government will and must always protect the strong, since that is its function as the organ of the dominant section—or, as we know is the case with all other organs when they cease to fulfil their function, become rudimentary and eventually extinct.

If we look closely, we find that the government does precious little but pretend in any of its Labor enactments unless the workers are organised and so already in a position to take some care of themselves. Even in Labor legislation it is mostly the strong who are taken notice of. Precious little was done in the matter of legislation for the peasants and tenants of Ireland before the Land League had become so strong that they could resist the extortionate demands of the landlords, in spite of the laws; and it was not until the cry of "No Rent!" and the idea of abolishing landlordism entirely had become popular that the government saw the necessity of fixing "fair" rents, as a means of saving something for the old party of privilege and plunder—the landlords—who have been the cause of all, or nearly all, the strife and misery in Ireland for centuries.

It was not till the Trade Unions of this country had become so strong in spite of the combination laws, that to attempt to crush them would have meant revolution, that they repealed them and tried to take the sting out of their organisations by casting over them the cloak of legality, and in return getting the Unions to send in their rules for registration; before doing which care was taken to eliminate everything that was not strictly within the limit of the law—and therefore of little avail in the struggle against exploitation.

When the miners had little or no organisation little or no notice was taken of them in Parliament; and, even now, it seems they will have to fall back on their own strength of organisation and action before any really serious change for the better in the matter of their hours of labor is effected.

But the unorganised among the workers, the weakest and worst paid, the casuals, the odd workers, the agricultural laborers, the seamstresses, the domestic servants, the charwomen and the numerous class of overworked and underpaid occupations,—what of these? This helpless mass, who if government really protected the weak against the strong would occupy most of its time,—do we hear of its doing much or anything for these? "They wouldn't if they could, and they couldn't if they would," is, we think, about the most accurate expression to describe what is being done.

The truth of the impotence of an eight-hour day from an economic point of view, so far as its being able to limit the exploitation of labor is concerned, is being proved wherever it is adopted. Those private firms who started working the eight-hour shifts find their profits as large as before; and now the government, who adopted the eight-hour day in some of their departments after being pressed by the Engineers and other trade societies, also find they can squeeze as much work out of their workers in a forty-eight hour week as they could in the longer one previously.

But there! the workers know how the government treats them when in its employ, and they know the sinecures it creates for the black-coated gentlemen in its anxiety to drive, bully, and exploit them. If we leave direct government employ and turn to those monopolies where the licence of the State is most glaring, do we find it as anxious to look after the interests of the workpeople employed, or even the benefit of the public as a whole, as it is to secure the plunder to the shareholders in the monopoly? Let us take the railways as an example. If there is one industry more than another where the eight-hour day could easily be introduced through the agency of the State, both for the security of the passengers and the benefit of the workpeople employed, it is on the railway systems of this country. It has been shown again and again that the fatal accidents that happen are mostly due to the overwork of those employed; and yet it has taken

years of agitation through the public press on behalf of the travelling public and all the pressure that it was possible for the Railway Workers' Unions to bring to bear upon the government before it could be got to do the little it has done recently, through the Board of Trade, to put some limit upon the flagrant risks the companies were ready to run in order to pay good dividends to the idle, exploiting shareholders in these over-capitalised concerns. And if the State will not move to introduce the legal limit in such concerns as these, where the public is directly concerned, can we expect it to do so, or even to make any pretence of doing so, in those industries which are looked upon as private undertakings, but regarded by us as private exploitations? No! if we are honest, we cannot. If we are ambitious to become political "leaders," we shall work for a while in the ranks of our fellow-workers, win their confidence, tickle the ears of the ignorant about what can be done by political action, stand for a seat in Parliament, and if, when returned, we are unable to fulfil the promises made (as is certain to be the case), when the trade unionists complain, tell them loftily that we are not answerable to them for our political conduct, but to the voters who have placed us in power. For the truth is, as we have already indicated, the government will not entertain anything like an eight-hour law till there is an effective majority in its favor in the House of Commons, and long before there is a majority of voters in its favor to return the M.P.s, a vast majority of workpeople will be anxious for it, and therefore in a position to take it without waiting for legal sanction.

Waiting for the politician to do for us what we have got to do for ourselves, if ever we are going to get it, is as hard as waiting for Providence. Faith and trust in politics has been the curse of the new Trade Union movement for a few years back. We do not believe in the stupid position of the older Unions which pretend to bar politics and yet support men from their ranks in parliament and allow them to bolster up one of the old political parties. We want to get our fellow-workers to understand that the science of politics is the science of their social and industrial enslavement, and that the only way to improve their position socially is to win better industrial conditions by direct action of their own, outside any political movement.

If, following in the wake of the excitement of the new Trade Union upheaval of five years ago, the workpeople had pressed on for an eight-hour day and not allowed political and legal methods to balk them, there is every reason to believe that the unskilled workers working in different occupations in the carrying trades, such as the Tram, Bus, and Railway companies, would have won it by a persistent agitation. If the miners, instead of paying M.P.s salaries to air their grievances in the deaf ears of Parliament and to become the tools of their political masters, had paid organisers salaries to educate and organise their fellows in the North, in Scotland, and in Wales, and retained in the hands of their Union, the thousands wasted in promoting the abortive Miners' Eight-hour Bill, the Miners' Federation would probably now be in a position to take what they have asked for legally—only to find themselves no "forarder." And the impetus this would have given the labor movement would have been felt all over the country, the same as the struggle for the nine-hour day in the North was some years back; and most likely the same results would have followed—the workers in all the main industries would have tried for the same, and the eight-hour day have become for the most part a practical reality.

As for the argument that without a law the workers would not keep it when they had secured it, we have already shown that those who did go for it, and got it, have kept it just so long as they showed determination. And the nine-hour day—have the workers not kept that? and if a nine, why not an eight-hour day?

J. TURNER.

(To be Continued.)

A DIALOGUE.

Dunce.—What is money?

Other Fellow.—Something rare and useless which you are compelled to obtain before anyone will let you get at things that are needful, useful and plentiful.

Dunce.—Oh! Then, I suppose, if you have not got any money you had better leave off hoping for the plentiful things, and set to work to make what you want for yourself.

Other Fellow.—Why, old man, you can't!

Dunce.—How's that? I feel as if I could.

Other Fellow.—Not you. Money is there to stop you. It is a means used not only for making it difficult for you to get at what is ready-made, but also for making it dangerous for you to start digging or planting, or making what you want for yourself.

Dunce.—Then what on earth is money good for?

Other Fellow.—Ah, that's where the joke comes in. Money is a device for enabling some people to get at whatever they want without paying for it.

Dunce.—What people are they?

Other Fellow.—Well, they have many names. They call themselves "noble" people, and "gentle" people; "upper" people, "higher" people, the "best" people, and so on. They speak of one another's "majesty," "highness," "grace," "holiness," and "eminence"; and are addressed as "honorable," "reverend," "learned," "worshipful"; and, in the absence of the other epithets, never miss getting themselves called "respectable."

Dunce.—What pretty names! Why do they call themselves all that?

Other Fellow.—Their god only knows. (There are three Ms and an N in their god's name. Aye! and he is in the know, too; and

"has mercy on them, miserable sinners.") But they only call themselves by fancy names when money is not being inquired about. When it is, and especially when they are thinking about the man in the street, they call themselves Sovereigns, Legislators, Owners, Employers, Pastors, Masters and Benefactors. And the man in the street is mostly careful to get well out of the way of their carriages-and-pairs before he has the cheek to nickname them Bosses, Exploiters, Sweaters, Parasites, Loafers and Frauds. They are all men of *means*, that's why.

Dunce.—What is a man of means?

Other Fellow.—I told you before: men with money enough to procure necessities, comforts, luxuries, leisure and pleasure without paying for them and entirely at other folk's expense; and then to force these folk to put up with them.

Dunce.—But don't people pay for what *money* they have?

Other Fellow.—Some do; some don't.

Dunce.—Who have the most money; the people who pay for it, or the people who don't?

Other Fellow.—The people who don't. They are called "rich" people, because they get more means than they can use up. They grow tall and live a long time, and are very much respected.

Dunce.—And what are the people called who pay for what money they have?

Other Fellow.—They are called "poor" people. They spend their time, strength and ability in making necessities, comforts and luxuries to give the rich people. They generally die early, and often miserably. They are not at all respected or envied.

Dunce.—Why do they spend themselves like that?

Other Fellow.—To buy a little money with, from the rich people whom they make the presents to. You see, they cannot have any food or clothing for themselves till they have bought some money. And without any food or clothing they could not go on spending their time and strength again to-morrow, and then the rich people would miss their luxuries.

Dunce.—But when they have bought enough money for their food and clothes, whom do they give it to? where do the food and clothes come from?

Other Fellow.—One question at a time, please. They *don't* give in the money where the food and clothes come from. They give the money to some people who have custody of the food and clothing, but who have not made it; and these people give a little of the money to the poor people who *have* made the food and clothes, keeping the rest for themselves. Sometimes the money is handed through several, and what passes on gets less and less, so that the men who buy the last shillings of it with the time and toil which they have spent away in providing the goods are, you see, poor men also. This way of going on is called "business."

Dunce.—Stop! Let me understand. Then you mean to say that some rich folk, whom for clearness I'll call Strong, Sons & Co., get the full produce of the poor men's life-time and life-strength, and turn it into counters, and then hand back a very few of the counters so that the poor men may have them as tickets for clothes and food, just enough to go on producing some more useful stuff for Strong & Co. to-morrow; and then do you tell me that another lot of rich people, whom we'll call Rong Brothers & Co., take the tickets as a bribe for the clothes and food, and keep back part of the counters from the other poor men who have made the clothes and food on like terms?

Other Fellow.—Yes, that's something like how it is. Only you've got to recollect that, with Strong, Sons & Co., over the way, insisting upon having everything they can think of for nothing, and forcing *everybody* to take their counters in exchange or go without, Messrs. Rong Brothers & Co. couldn't live at *all* (let alone live idly or "respectably") if they did not stop some of the goods from going straight where they are wanted, so as to be able to stop some of the counters coming from the other direction. They then let the goods pass on their way on condition of receiving *more* counters than they gave up in order to get the goods into their custody. What do you think of it all?

Dunce.—Why, if you ask me plainly, I think the rich men are impudent rogues, and the poor men are damned fools. Which are you, sir, may I ask?

Other Fellow.—Oh, I'm one of the damned fools, or I certainly should not have answered your questions on the square. But, mark you, the impudence of the other gang is *legal*. There's a deal in that. And it takes a clever dunce like you to find out I am a fool. Most people think a man wise and prudent who puts up with what is legal. But you're right; I *am* a fool.

Dunce.—Legal! legal!—what's *legal*?

Other Fellow.—Oh, come now! Have I got to explain that too? Legal means according to Parliamentary law: the business way of managing to live by money, at the cost of other people's lives and liberties is according to law, whether fools call it impudence or not.

Dunce.—Isn't there any plainer word to tell me what Parliamentary law is; and why it makes people seem wise who put up with being impudently treated?

Other Fellow.—Why, Parliamentary law is whatever a few score of fellows have settled among themselves to make tens of millions of other people conform to; in fact, everybody is made to conform who has not extra money enough to make it worth the while of anyone in office to let him go his own way instead.

Dunce.—Oh! ah! But that isn't telling me *what* "law" is. What is it those fellows want you to conform to?

Other Fellow.—Well, you've got to conform to anything, no matter what, that more than half this little lot of fellows want to see other people do. Sometimes it's one thing; sometimes it's another: but it is always whatever this lot of fellows suppose will turn out best for *business*.

Dunce.—Then, it is only the wishes of the bigger number of this little lot that all other people are made to conform to? And the wishes of these law-fellows is whatever is good for business? And business is the plan of getting most money into the hands of people who pay least? And money is a means by which these people may make it difficult for the rest of us to get at what is necessary in order to make useful things with, and difficult to have the use of them when made? (Scratches his head.) And folks are "damned fools" who don't see the wisdom of putting up with it all.....Please, sir, what is this country called?—because it seems to me that everyone in it is off his chump.

Other Fellow.—You dunce! It is a glorious Empire! The land of the *free*!!

Dunce.—Free what? Free business-law makers? or free rich law-breakers? or free swindlers and sweaters? or what?

Other Fellow.—Sh—! It isn't respectable to talk like that. Free *citizens*, of course! A free citizen is a law-abiding citizen. You are free just as far as you do what you are told.

Dunce.—I say, you're having a game with me! I'm not such a dunce that I don't know what "free" means. It doesn't mean abiding by what you are told, especially when you can't "abide" the chaps that tell you, nor yet their impudence. Free means exactly the opposite. It means living just how your own give-and-take commonsense makes you want to live. It means not being made to toil when you are in want of rest; and it means not being forced to be idle when you want to be at work.

Other Fellow.—Oh, that sort of freedom is only fit for angels and the other lower animals. It may suit beavers and birds and bees all right; but you and I are free citizens, you know, because we can take our chance of choosing *whose* wishes we will conform to. We can have a "Yes," or "No," to give to anyone who wants to be a law-maker; and if a certain number of others choose him too, then he can be one of those whose will will become our law and everyone else's, that is, of course, if he is one of those who, *by counting heads*, prevails over the others in Parliament. You must see how much freer that makes a citizen than having only himself to consult! And a country may well be called free where nearly everyone can help choose his own law-master, some one whose head may chance to count up on the right side.

Dunce.—*Nearly everyone*? I suppose that means nine out of ten of us? Well, there's me and my wife at home, and my aged mother, and my daughter, aged 22; and two strong sons of 17 and 18. I suppose if nearly all of us can help choose whose wishes we'll conform to (so that business may go on) we all of us at home can have a choice; unless perhaps me, because everyone knows I'm a dunce. My mother and wife and daughter and sons are all very sharp witted.

Other Fellow.—No: on the contrary, it's only you in all the family who may help choose someone to impose on the lot of you *his* way of keeping business what it is, and of keeping the rich people where they are,—that is, in position and in possession.

Dunce.—Lord! how queer! What knocks me is your saying we are *all* free citizens. If many households are constituted like mine I should say it was only a small minority who may even choose, and its a chance whose choice wins; and that believing in one master more than another has nothing to do with being *free*. But now, explain to me why anyone *must* choose any law-maker at all?

Other Fellow.—*Must* choose? Well, there's nothing to make you choose *anyone* if you don't want to. And there's no *reason*, if you come to that, why people who don't like to spend their lives in working and suffering for the leisure and pleasure of those who take all their means from them, and run the laws to save themselves from being opposed,—no reason *at all* why they should choose anyone. But I suppose they do it because they good-naturedly believe the man they choose cares more about them than himself; or because they believe it is good for somebody else even if it isn't very advantageous for themselves to have to conform to whomsoever wants to have his will made into law. And then, you see, if the poor don't help choose, they rightly suppose the rich will have all the choosing to themselves; and everything would be more business-like than ever. For, if you don't help choose, mark you, you have to conform to what *others* choose, all the same.

Dunce.—What a hell of a fix! But you keep on saying "*have* to conform," and "*make* you conform." How's that? How can you be *made* to do anything in a land of free citizens?

Other Fellow.—What I mean by being made to conform is that if it is known you don't want to conform you'll not get employed to help fatten any business man and his covey. And if he don't want you for his job you'll starve, just in proportion as you are free and law-abiding. That is your impersonal, non-aggressive legal punishment at his hands. And if you really set about going your own way as a man, wherever and whenever you think the law is unfair, then you'll get a personal and direct punishment. Why, man alive! you've heard of "coppers" and police-courts, and soldiers and bullets and prisons and gallows, eh? You live in the enemy's country wherever you go.

(Continued on page 18.)

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NOTES.

AN M.P. COME TO HIS SENSES.

Dr. Macgregor has left the House of Commons a wiser man than he went in. We trust the I.L.P. will note his remarks on this matter, as they convey the moral we have been pointing for years. Politics, he says, are a delusion and a snare; for he has found it impossible to do an honest, straightforward day's work in the House of Commons.

For three years the Doctor has waited patiently for the Government to consider the case of the crofters. But if the good Doctor's patience has been tried, what about the poor crofters who have been toiling and suffering all this while? We should like to have *their* opinion of the House of Commons; and we should advise Mr. Lansbury not to seek their suffrages for some time to come, as he might possibly come off worse there than he did in Walworth.

And now we are wondering who will be the next M.P. to come to his senses—not Mr. John Burns, we are afraid. Well, we can assure Dr. Macgregor that if he has only met with laughter from a Liberal government, he has at least gained the respect of all people who can admire sincerity of conduct. No doubt it is a pity he ever wasted his time on politics, but the crofters, we are sure, will not blame him now. "Neither will we condemn thee: go forth and vote no more."

THE WILDE CASE.

On the Wilde case we would say first a few words. We will not, to begin with, assume him guilty because a judge and twelve men said so. He *may* be guilty; he *may* be innocent; but, whichever is the case, we as Anarchists protest against the trial and we protest against the sentence. It makes no difference to us to know that, if the "officers of the law" really were in earnest, hundreds of the idle rich would be side by side with Wilde. The fact remains that the whole business is a disgrace; that all persons, except the hypocrites who hold to our present system, must see that no one principle of truly human morality has been vindicated; that not one single member of the community is in the least degree the better for the disclosures which have come to light, or for the brutal sentences which have been passed.

Something will be said upon this subject in our next issue, so we will content ourselves with adding, presuming the guilt of the two men, what in the name of all that's human can be the moralising effect of oakum-picking and the treadmill on the nerve-centres of these morbidly afflicted persons? We know there is some sad lapse from a healthy state in all this, which their life-conditions have helped to encourage; but, fools that we are, we hand them over to judge and jury, and expect *them* to minister to a mind diseased!

THE SCIENCE OF GOVERNMENT.

The science of government still continues to be "How not to do it"—that is to say, where "doing it" means anything that might conceivably benefit the people. As an instance of which, watch the progress of this precious Factory Bill with which some "labor leaders" and democrats are going to do such wonders—when it's passed.

It is weary work to follow all the useless quibbling about clauses and amendments, but if done, it ought to make good Anarchical propaganda. Take, for instance, this example—a shocking example—of the tactics of Labour leaders in the House. Mr. S. Woods, Secretary of the Trades Union Congress (!) puts down an amendment in favor of the clauses legalising the employment of boys of 14 for 14 hours *night work on four nights running* in fiercely-heated factories. We notice Mr. Burns is to oppose it, but be sure it matters not to the workers which of the "leaders" gets his way; their condition will not be improved one iota by anything the bill can do for them. Why, in fact, are M.P.s pottering with this bill at all, seeing that we have already had a Factory Bill which, when it was passed, was hailed as a triumph of legislative skill and foresight? Of course, it never met the case, any more than those land bills for Ireland, which have followed one upon the other, brought her the amelioration they promised. Poor Ireland! She has had her land bills *ad nauseam*, but her freedom and prosperity have still to be won. So it must be with the Factory Bill, as the workers will too surely find. All the same, some instruction can be gained by watching the vagaries of our Parliamentary benefactors. Sam Woods and John Burns, for instance, in direct antagonism, must be a refreshing sight for the Trades Unionists when they recall what the latter told them about their divided camps over the May Day celebration. How impossible it is to be an M.P. and to be consistent!

MAGISTERIAL PROPHECIES.

We suppose that magistrates as a rule know very little of sociology,

get befogged occasionally as to the motives which lead people to commit certain acts, as, for instance, the insubordination of a character like Alice King, who, whilst an inmate of the Wandsworth and Clapham Union, had such a strong objection to being told when to go to bed and when to rise that she broke windows—workhouse windows, above all!—as a protest against obeying these commands. She even went so far as to assault that gentle soul, the labor matron, and this resulted in her being brought before Mr. Cluer at the South Western Police Court. Mr. Cluer was obviously "knocked" when he heard of her misdeeds. Mr. McGowan, the court missionary, who testified to the character of this rebel, added that he was bound to say "her character was free from any signs of immorality." Then Mr. Cluer, having recovered from his overpowering surprise, launched out into prophecy. In a thousand years hence, said he, people would become civilised, and would put all useless persons in a lethal chamber, such as may be found in the Dogs' Home. Then to indicate, as it were, our present state of civilisation, he sentenced the said Alice King to 21 days' hard labor.

Now it is strange how opinions vary, but we think that Alice King's dislike of a workhouse *régime* might easily be accounted for, and that a person with a character "free from any signs of immorality" might become a very useful member of society. On the other hand, we are absolutely certain of the uselessness of magistrates; and plenty have shared this opinion. Charles Dickens, for instance, had a fine contempt for the family of the Nupkinses. So the last person to prophesy of the fate of useless persons should be a magistrate. He, at any rate, would have a poor chance of escape if the lethal chamber was in vogue to-day—especially if Alice King had the turning on of the gas.

ANARCHISTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS.

Seeing how difficult it is becoming for Anarchists to obtain a hearing among some wire-pulling sections of the Social-Democratic party, we think it would be an advantage to all concerned if a full expression of opinion from the various Socialist organs could be had on this subject. The tactics adopted over the May-Day Demonstration have warned us that it will be a hard struggle to get fair play, if some people are to have their way. How foolish to ask the workers of the world to unite when immediately that some come with freer ideas than the majority, they are to be brow-beaten and silenced by a class of people who by this time ought to be valued at their true worth.

ANARCHISM IN GERMANY.

Whilst the revolutionists of the Roman countries more directly came to their anarchical ideals (*i.e.*, by building on true Socialism, and without believing in and experiencing at the same time State Socialism), the German Anarchist movement was born in the Social Democratic party—in a party whose tendencies toward centralisation and regulation of the entire social life by a Democratic State are generally known. The centralised organisation of the party, and the absorption of all reactionary tactics by particularism, became, even during the period of exceptional laws, the cause of serious disputes and opposition, headed by the most energetic members of different local organisations, especially in Berlin.

With the abolition of the exceptional law (1890) this opposition became at once an open one. The discontented elements, however, who soon separated themselves from the party as the "Independents" (*die Unabhängigen*), were far from having any decided new theoretical views. It was principally the economical theories of Marx on which they based their opposition to the parliamentary tactics of the leaders. The tactics which they proposed were—federal organisation of the party, energetic propaganda in the trade unions, which they considered as the productive elements, in embryo, of a future society, no participation in elections for parliament, corporations, or county councils.

But the critics, who at first rejected parliamentarism except as a means of propaganda, ended by rejecting it as an institution of society. That meant rejection of the representative system, of the last form of government, *i.e.*, Anarchism. This conversion, influenced by different factors, partly by French literature, took several years. Gradually and insensibly the bulk of the movement and the writers of their journal, *Der Sozialist*, became Anarchist, whilst the democratically elected administration of this paper and a very small part of some groups in Berlin remained Independent. A new dispute was inevitable, and in the summer of 1893 the administration of the *Sozialist* left and separated themselves, with some friends (altogether not more than 200), from the movement, which now openly declared itself Anarchist.

The Independents really exist as a party no longer. Some of them returned to the ranks of the Social Democratic party; the rest have retired completely from political life. The Anarchist movement since this time made great progress in a theoretical direction as well as in numbers. The majority became Anarchist-Communists the rest call themselves Anarchist-Collectivists (they reject the State and conceive the future society as a federation of producing and consuming groups competing with each other); the relations between both sections are friendly. The growth of the movement is proved by the fact that the *Sozialist* (a weekly paper), which had in 1893 scarcely three thousand readers, reached in 1894 the number of five thousand, and that the pamphlets edited by the journal were sold very quickly in large quantities (five twenty thousands).

Under these circumstances the government believed it high time to interfere; so began with the spring of 1894 a series of the most arbitrary and severe persecutions, especially directed against the *Sozialist*. They arrested and condemned besides the editors (in open contravention of the Press law), the printers, and the publishers, and, finally,

confiscated the lists of the subscribers, and ordered the post office to retain all money orders, letters, manuscripts, etc. This struggle commenced with March, 1894, and ended in January, 1895, with the disappearance of the *Sozialist*. The sentences passed during this time on the different members of the editorial committee of this paper amounted to eighty months' imprisonment; that means that each of the forty-five last numbers cost nearly two months' imprisonment, excluding legal expenses, help to the families of the condemned, etc. I abstain from enumerating all the other persecutions, the confiscations of pamphlets, which, after having openly circulated more than a year, suddenly became dangerous for the public peace, and the unheard-of condemnations for public speeches.

For the present the propaganda is done by public meetings, in Trades Unions, and by some of the unforbidden pamphlets. Time will be required to initiate a new effective literary propaganda. Recently a great enthusiasm for the co-operative movement is noticeable in some groups of comrades. The German translation of the work on co-operation by Beatrice Potter (Webb) and the co-operative movement in Great Britain seems to have influenced them to a certain extent. Some leaflets and one little pamphlet on co-operation are issued, and one co-operative society has been founded by some comrades in Berlin. The Reichstag has lately rejected the "Anti-revolutionist Law" proposed by the government. Originating in the general fear caused by the last attempts in Paris, this law was of a form and kind to be applied not only against Socialists or Anarchists, but all those of free-spirited tendencies (Freethinkers, etc.). The opposition to the law was therefore almost general. Professors at universities, one conservative Prince (Schönaich-Carolath), and some of the bourgeois parties as a bulk (Progressists, Radicals, and even the Clericals—the strongest party in Germany) joined in the agitation against it. In the debates the Social Democratic members of parliament repudiated all solidarity with the Anarchists, and excelled in the most cowardly and pacific declarations. Bebel, it is true not for the first time, said the Social Democrats were far from having any intention of converting the army to their views, so that the government, in the case of a revolution, might not rely on the soldiery; if the economical development produced this result it would not be the fault of the Social Democratic party.

The members of the government finally, seeing that the bill was lost, became much irritated. The Home Secretary, Köller (this does not harmonise with a constitutional form of government) said—"You are to vote the budget and the laws proposed by the government. That is all that you have to do." The Social Democrats and Progressists thought that the government intended either to dissolve the Reichstag or to make a *coup d'état*—i.e., to abolish the Reichstag. Some conservative papers exhort the government to do so, but neither event seems very probable.

SOCIAL REORGANISATION.

I.—CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY.

It is an unmistakable sign of the social changes which must be near at hand when one finds a number of persons, holding widely different views on social and political subjects, engaged in seriously discussing ideas and suggestions for the reorganisation of our present (so-called) social system.

Undoubtedly this is the case at present, as one can see with half an eye how even apparently outside questions ultimately converge into the all-important problem—"How can the evils of capitalism be modified or, if possible, eliminated?"

We do not, of course, mean to imply that capitalism does not find plenty of self-interested champions in the present day, nor do we deny that there are many who through apathy or ignorance lend it, as it were, a negative support: what we do mean is that even the avowed supporters of the present system are using their wits to smooth down the sharp edges of the economic struggle in places where the workers cry loudest against the pricks and buffets of their hard life. As a consequence of this all sorts of schemes, from the sublime to the ridiculous, are being considered and discussed. So far as we Anarchists are concerned these passing phenomena are of deep interest and importance, since by a critical observation of the various social tendencies of our day we can best determine how to encourage and strengthen those social forces which truly make for freedom, and combat more effectually those insidious and reactionary ideas which at these times are bound to be met with, and whose effect is more harmful in proportion as they simulate the appearance of being necessary factors in social reconstruction, the while they are deceiving the unwary.

We wish in the present article to consider the question of production: how it might be organised on Anarchist principles, and how it is proposed to be organised by the authoritarian Socialists.

Reduced to their simplest expressions we have here, face to face, two antagonistic ideas: the Voluntary principle as advocated by Anarchists, and the Compulsory principle as preached by Social Democrats.

The compulsory principle is embodied in the State, and in the State, as conceived by the Social Democrat, "captains of industry" will be indispensable for the management and control of production. We will not pretend to estimate the exact measure of their power, but will content ourselves with saying that they will, necessarily, demand obedience to their orders; and in this demand they will be backed by the State to such extent as may be deemed necessary or prudent. The point to be remembered, then, is that obedience will be necessary to ensure the rôle they are expected to play.

Now let us see what function these captains of industry are fulfilling under present conditions, and then try and estimate their probable utility under new economic conditions.

Here is a factory, of no matter what description; in it are produced commodities. This production is arranged somewhat as follows:—To use the tools or the machinery, as the case may be, is employed a more or less numerous body of workers who handle, with varying degrees of skill, the raw materials necessary for the production of the commodities. As a rule, there are some divisions in the arrangement of the workers, and over these divisions are generally placed foremen. The duty of the foreman is to get his orders from the manager and to see them carried out by the section of workers over whom he is placed. Further, he is expected (and here we arrive at the real value of the man to his master) to check the quantity and quality of the work done and the time taken in performing it.

Here is a splendid opportunity for the production of that friction and feeling of enmity which is constantly at work under the surface of an apparently smooth exterior.

Above all this stands our so-called Captain of Industry as general manager of the factory, or even, may be, the owner of it himself. In either case he has a keen eye for the interests of the business as a paying concern and to this end he uses those abilities without which according to G. B. Shaw and others, the workers would find themselves simply the useless parts of a machine without motive power.

This is a serious error which a few months' experience as a worker in any factory would speedily dispel. Not that we wish to deny the "captain" the credit of his work. He is generally speaking a splendid exploiter, a sweater *par excellence*, and none know this so well as those who are under him. We are not despising him for this except in so far as we despise the whole system; but when he is trotted out as a most essential factor in the future Socialist system of organised production in spite of our smiles we must seriously protest. We will not speak of that of which we know nothing, but we affirm without hesitation and from practical experience that it is the workers who by their initiative, as far as it is given opportunity, by their suggestions, by their everyday acquaintance with things are constantly surmounting difficulties for which our modest "captain" takes all the credit. Have you never seen the bricklayer point out the errors in the architect's plan? or the carpenter correct the drawings from which he is supposed to work? Have you never heard the mower tell his master which field of wheat will be ready to cut first? or have you never seen the laborer repairing the damage to the steam-plough while the farmer stands helplessly by? Well, all these things are to be seen every day of our lives if we keep our eyes open for facts, and do not go about with our noses in the air, lost in a stupid admiration of the busybodies with big names and brazen voices, impostors who make a fine thing out of their bossing propensities, but who are, none the less, only the big bullies of commercialism.

Now the problem of industrial organisation will never be solved by authoritarian methods, the evils of which we see around us and from which the majority of workers even now feel the necessity of escaping. Is it to be supposed that with the prospect of economic freedom in view the workers will voluntarily submit to the old bossing and dominating ideas? Emphatically no! and for this reason, amongst others, the practical necessity of Anarchist methods becomes apparent. We could not transplant into a free society such a monstrous anomaly as your "captain of industry" with his compulsory methods and his egotistic demands for a high rate of remuneration to satisfy his "rent of ability." This would be "looking backward" with a vengeance.

As always happens on the eve of great changes, men are stirred by many impulses; but, surely, to-day we can see signs enough of that desire for freedom which gives us most hope for the future. Take, for instance, the cry of "Back to the land!" That is on everybody's lips; but along with this another voice is also heard calling for the organisation of the Commune—the Free Commune.

Now it is a noteworthy fact that people no longer talk of emigration to some distant land to attempt the realization of their ideal. They want to begin at home; and, what is more, they are making a commencement. There is no mistaking this fact of a growing desire amongst an intelligent section of the people for a communal life, and a most important point to be noted is the distinctly Anarchist tendency of the plans which are being formed for the new experiments. No place is left for the "captain of industry," who would speedily wreck their hopes. Failure may overtake them, it is true, by the pressure of outside circumstances; but their chances of success will be increased just in proportion as they can dispense with authoritarian methods and ensure for the individual the liberty and free initiative without which success is out of the question.

Therefore when the Anarchists speak of the organisation of production and exchange they mean *free* organisation in a free society, and nothing less. No modified system of capitalism seems to us possible, let alone desirable. For if an evil of the present system could be suppressed in one quarter, other and worse evils would break out in other directions. That is why legislation is always being asked for, and when obtained is found useless.

But in a free society a rational and practical basis is at once obtained. Under freedom many methods can be tried, accepted or rejected as experience proves wisest. And why should we not, each of us, choose our method of working and the work we like best? Should we not be expected to choose our food and clothing? Then why not our work?

But freedom implies social equality, and therefore only *voluntary* arrangements for the attainment of these ends would be permissible. Why put two men to drive an engine who are always at loggerheads? Authority says they must submit, but freedom says it is absurd and will lead to disaster; therefore let other arrangements be arrived at; and about this there is no difficulty when one has one's choice. Certainly

these differences will arise, but let it be remembered that disputes between equals are easily adjusted: it is the warring interests of master and slave that find no solution.

A DIALOGUE.

(Continued.)

Dunce.—Yes; but even now I can't imagine how it is possible to get the prisons built, or to find police and soldiers enough to do any particular harm with, if there are so few rich people in comparison with poor people. For, I suppose it is only rich people who care to build prisons or arsenals, or who will care to be coppers or soldiers or hangmen?

Other Fellow.—You Juggins! No. The rich people can't do all that! Why they want all their time for the Turf, and clubs, and big "receptions," and "little" dinners, etc., etc. The prison-builders, and bullet and bomb makers, gallows-men, soldiers and bobbies are all poor devils like you and me! The rich folk carry out their law against the poor with the help of the poor. If our sort didn't do it for them, and bully our own sort in favour of the big bugs, then it wouldn't get done at all, because it *couldn't*.

Dunce.—Then being poor seems to make men do whatever rich folk want done; even if it is to injure themselves and to help kill one another.

Other Fellow.—Yes: being poor means being governed, body and soul. Being rich means governing.

OVER THE WATER.

Things are going ahead here. The monopolists are combining to stem the tide of discontent that surges stormily against them.

United States. Is there any cause for the seething discontent that has so often revealed itself in gigantic strikes and bloody struggles between the workers and the hired cutthroats employed by their masters in recent years? Well, I guess so.

Have you never read how the Spring Valley miners were induced to settle in that wilderness and to pay money off their homesteads to a philanthropic Company—that found them work; and suddenly, in the winter, shut down the mines and foreclosed on the workers' homes, so that hundreds starved and froze to death, and offered the survivors work at less than a bare subsistence wage?

Here's something similar:—"If there was anything wanting to wreck the faith of workmen in philanthropy or the beneficence of capital, the lesson taught by the eviction of 150 families from the town of Pullman ought to do it. It is not sufficient to heap loathing and hatred upon the name of George M. Pullman, who is the founder of a city that for years past has been looked upon as the ideal in its relationship to capital and labor. We should go to the very root of the matter, and there we will find that between master and slave there can be no ideal relationship. To speak of an American workingman as a slave appears to be the language of exaggeration. But it is not so. This turning out of 150 families, composing in all probably 500 persons, from what they call their homes, will prove it. The account given us states that they have been in a starving condition all winter, and had it not been for the charity of others in the town almost as poor as themselves, they would have died of hunger. Now when a nod or a word from one man can reduce another man and his family to such a condition, what is the use of prating about liberty. There is not a man, or woman either, for that matter, in the country that occupies the position of an employee that can be called free. All slaves, every one. While the former Pullman employees have been in that state known as the "verge of starvation," the company has been paying its usual dividends, the lowest of which has been, even during the strike, eight per cent. The increase in profits and in plant has been steady, the stockholders, who labored not, have lived in luxury."—*Twentieth Century*, New York, May 2. (These employees had previously been well peppered with bullets while endeavouring to resist a reduction of wages and arbitrary conditions of work.)

Then, again, the famous struggles at the Coal Creek mines in Tennessee, and at Carnegie's Steel Works in Pennsylvania were caused by the attempts of the monopolists to impose such conditions that the workers preferred to struggle to the death rather than submit.

Of course the workers begin to think, in a vague sort of way, that there is something wrong with the social system; and their masters, apprehensive that this feeling may lead to some serious disturbance of their rule, have given up the political sham fight between "Republicans" and "Democrats," and the two parties are combining to run a "safe" man for the next President, one who has already shown that he will not scruple to assist with military and machine-guns when the monopolists want to bleed the workers a little (or a great deal) more,—namely, Grover Cleveland.

Here is what the *Philadelphia Times* (the official organ of this combination) has to say on this subject:—"There are two issues which will be paramount in the great national contest of 1896, and all other questions will be merely incidental. They are:—

"First, an absolutely sound financial system that will maintain public and private credit and a currency that will command confidence at home and throughout the civilised world.

"Second, the maintenance of law and order and the protection of person and property by all the powers of government.

The party and candidate that shall occupy a doubtful attitude on the issue will be earnestly and aggressively opposed in these columns regardless of the party flag. . . . Next to honest money the most vital issue is that of the maintenance of law and order and the protection of person and property by all the powers of the Government.

"We had a painful object lesson of the necessity of the exercise of this power during the recent Chicago riots, and President Cleveland in a single breath effaced forever the lingering dregs of the State rights theory that was pleaded on behalf of riot and murder. He has made a record on this question that the nation must adhere to, and whoever shall be called to succeed him must be thoroughly sound upon this issue or lawlessness would speedily be stronger than the Government.

"There are just two issues for the people to determine in the battle of '96. Whether the new President shall be Republican or Democrat is of little moment, but it is of moment that we shall have honest money and honest obedience to the majesty of law and the protection of person and property."

As the *Journal of the Knights of Labor* says, this means nothing less than immediate military suppression of all efforts of Labor to free itself from the clutches of Monopoly. The reference to "State rights" in this manifesto of the Plutocrats means that President Cleveland sent military into the State of Illinois to suppress the Railway Strike—without the invitation of the Governor of the State and in defiance of the Constitution. Looks like lively times for working-men in this free and glorious Republic!

T. C.

SOCIALISM OR DEMOCRACY.

WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

This is the question I involuntarily ask myself after reading a whole series of books, pamphlets, newspaper articles, manifestoes, and programs published by the "learned men," and local, national, and international congresses of the "Scientific" Socialist party. For a long while we have been told that men of genius, of German extraction, have created a truly scientific idealism founded upon the metaphysics of Hegel—the Socialism propagated and practised by Social Democrats. But I long ago felt somewhat doubtful about it, because I knew that neither the metaphysics of Hegel nor the dialectical method so praised by Mr. Engels have had much influence among learned and thoughtful men in England and France. Even in Germany itself really scientific persons, such as Du Bois Raimond, Buchner, and Haeckel,* have repudiated the least connection with what is so clear to Mr. Engels. A great authority upon modern philosophy, Prof. Wundt,† explains that "Hegel was a true philosopher of the Restoration" (i.e., extreme reaction against the humanitarian ideas of the Great Revolution). "For him the State is an incarnation of moral life, of social organisation; consequently every individual will should be rigorously submitted to the supreme will of the State. . . . His idea of the latter is the glorification of a constitutional, bureaucratic order or system. By this definition he endeavors to sanction and perpetuate as a postulate, an absolute truth, the fullest and absurdest forms of social life. The political tendency of his general idea, his philosophy of history, is suited to the doctrines of the Restoration," or rather, as we should say, the Reaction.

Upon the famous dialectical method, which Marx and Engels boast of applying to economical research, the learned professor expresses himself still more sternly. "The dialectical method of their speculations [speaking of Hegel, Fichte, etc.] appears to us a repulsive and artificial envelopment which denaturalised all ideas."

I was very doubtful if anything really scientific could come of a philosophy rejected by science, condemned by historians such as Schlosser and many others; by Socialists like Tchernychevsky and Marx himself;‡ by philosophers like Wundt, H. S. Lewis, and J. S. Mill. But under the influence of the fabricators of a pretentious legend¶ it is attempted to impose upon the workers of the civilised world this reactionary and aristocratic rubbish as a "scientific" basis for modern Socialism. It is true that enlightened men of independent minds have pronounced against this evil attempt of Liebknecht, Engels, Plekhanoff, and others;§ but the tide of reaction rises rapidly. It is urgent to oppose it, to show the workers that their good faith is being abused, and that, instead of humanitarian ideas, authority, bureaucracy, and officialism are being pressed upon them. The fundamental and general idea of all the great founders of Socialism, Robert Owen, St. Simon, and Fourier, may thus be formulated:—

1. From the economic point of view they claimed "for each according to his needs; from each according to his capacity and his good pleasure."

2. From the social point of view the free individual in an association of men acting and taking their instructions from within the association; autonomous associations in the federation of a free and united humanity.||

As may be seen, we Anarchists are very faithful to these formulas. Let us now see how we are appreciated by the "Scientific" Socialists. "As Socialists we believe that these (Anarchist) doctrines and the tactics. . . . advocated as revolutionary by men who are honest and single-minded, are really reactionary both in theory and practice" (*Manifesto of English Socialists*, p. 5). According to Liebknecht, Plekhanoff, etc., the majority of us are police spies;¶ (according to the same authorities, we have borrowed all our ideas from bourgeois authors like H. Spencer and M. Sterner,× and make their readers believe that we borrow nothing from the above-named founders of Socialism.

According to Marx and Engels, the most remarkable men of our party, Bakounine and Guillaume, for instance, were immoral;‡ according to G. Bernard Shaw, Anarchy is impossible;‡‡ and Sidney Webb assures the workers that we have nothing in common with Socialism.]]

Very well. As we demand autonomous Communism, as we are faithful to the founders of Socialism, we are not Socialists. Then let us see what is this Socialism "made in Germany." For what Socialist demands are the German workers made to vote? "What do we ask

* Ernst Haeckel, *Monism*; Ch. Black, London, 1895.

† See his lecture before the University of Leipzig, 1889.

‡ See below.

¶ See my article in *Freedom*, April, 1894.

§ Domela Nieuwenhuis' *Le Socialisme en Danger*, translated in *Liberty*; Professor Kareef and the famous Russian sociologist N. Mikhailovsky, etc.

|| "The world cultivated by autonomous associations," was preached by St. Simon; integral instruction and voluntary and attractive labor, by Fourier and V. Considerant; autonomous Communism, in its largest conception, by Robert Owen. Louis Blanc, from whom Lassalle, Marx and Engels and other Social Democrats have taken the State system of the organisation of labor, was the first to formulate: "From each according to his capacities, to each according to his needs."—See Kircup's "History of Socialism."

((G. Plekhanoff "Anarchism and Socialism."

× "The Alliance of Socialist Democracy," Report by Marx at the Hague Congress, 1872.

** Same pamphlet.

‡‡ "Impossibilities of Anarchism."

]] "Socialism, true and false."

for? Absolute liberty of the press, absolute liberty of religion, universal suffrage for all representative bodies and public offices in the State and in the Commune; national education, all schools open to all, the same opportunities of learning and education for all, abolition of standing armies and creation of national militia, so that every citizen is a soldier and every soldier a citizen; an international court of arbitration between different States, equal rights for men and women, measures for the protection of the working classes (limitation of hours of work, sanitary regulations, etc.). It is Liebknecht himself who formulates, and very faithfully, the Erfurt program, adopted by Social Democrats everywhere. All these liberties, abolitions, equalisations are very good and humane; but where are the Socialist demands formulated above? What Liebknecht tells us we have known for years as the program of the Radical middle class, of advanced Liberals, of Republicans like Gobelet, Clemenceau, Rochefort, Tallandier, and others. The Swiss Republic already enjoys these liberties, and more, for it has its referendum and direct legislation. Yes, the Swiss Constitution is still more liberal. Then there is no Social question there? It appears not, according to this program of "true, scientific Socialism"; therefore it is that the Social Democrats in Switzerland occupy the posts of chief of police and of several government offices. I have nothing against all this. I recognise that Liberals and Radicals have rendered great services to mankind; that Gladstone, Garibaldi, Mazzini, Rochefort have always been in favor of the amelioration of the social and economic condition of the working classes; that these historical personages can admit Liebknecht's program; but I believe that no one reckons these men amongst Socialists.

(To be continued)

PROPERTY & GOVERNMENT.

I want to take exception to the position taken up by comrade L. S. Bevington on this matter.

If by the "property" she attacks she meant the right of A to extort from B blackmail in the name of rent or interest, before letting B have the use, of what he is desperately in need of and A. does not want to use himself, I would be quite in accord with her, and so, I suppose, would be all other Anarchists. I should fancy, however, that in that case it would be better if she would give up using the term "property" and use one which is not so likely to lead to misunderstanding, such as Monopoly, Capitalism, or monopolistic property. But evidently comrade Bevington means something more than that. Well, I don't want to argue with her about metaphysical "natural" or "real" relations of the producer to the produce. I don't care a copper whether they exist or no. I should like comrade Bevington, however, to tell us what she would do in a case like the following:

Suppose A and B have gardens of equal size and possibilities. A plants and tends potatoes in his with care and skill. B does it so carelessly that his potatoes ripen a month behind A's, or he plants flowers instead, perhaps does not trouble himself to plant anything at all. Now suppose that when B noticed A's potatoes just becoming fit to eat he goes along with a bag and, on the ground that A is not using them, or that he (B) needs them just as much as A, or that there is no real relation between a man and the potatoes which he planted, begins to fill his bag in spite of A's protests. What would comrade Bevington say if she were passing? Would she denounce A as a would-be governor because he wanted to dispose himself of the potatoes once they were big enough? Or would she consider A entitled to resist and worthy of support?

The men started with equal opportunities and full liberty in using them. If, in addition to his flowers or his leisure, B now wants to take A's potatoes it seems to me that he wants something more than (equal) liberty unless he is willing to ask them from A and, if need be, arrange with him for a fair exchange. Even if he is willing to let A take his flowers, is A not entitled, if he prefers, rather to exchange for the carrots and cabbages of C and D? I know that if I were in A's place and found B digging up the potatoes I had taken so much trouble to grow, without so much as saying to me "By your leave?" I should consider him just as much a thief and enemy to liberty as I consider our present potato-stealer, the landlord.

We need not make a fetish of "property." There is no particular manifestation of divine power in the act of appropriating, shaping and keeping a bit of the earth's raw material. There are certain serious flaws even in the labour title to property. Its theory must be based on the supposition that there is equality in regard to opportunity of appropriation; and, of course, though the old simple plan of "first come, first served," "the economic right of the first comer," may serve well enough in ordinary matters as a working rule, it is, after all, only a very rough approximation to the required equality. It is rejected at once in a boat adrift at sea or a city besieged, wherever the raw material runs short. Again, there is the difficulty of determining the individual share in the social production. "The free exchange of the open market" in the absence of monopoly, may again serve well enough as a working rule; but it is far from that exactitude required to make the theory absolute.

With such defective title evidently it won't do for the propertist to be too dogmatic. Nevertheless, although it is impossible to divide even an apple exactly, any two schoolboys can show you how to divide it fairly and in such a way as to satisfy both; and I don't see why grown-up people in an Anarchist society, with a full mental development and at least as socially inclined, should not be able to attain a degree of fairness at which nobody could grumble much,—more especially if there were plenty of apples. It is not possible, and never will be possible, to determine exactly the limits of property; but then, in the same way, it is not possible, and never will be possible, to determine exactly the limits of liberty. Must we, therefore, resign ourselves to slavery?

As an Anarchist, I aim at fullest (equal) liberty possible; and I cannot see that we have the fullest liberty possible if a man is not to be free to dispose in any legitimate way he thinks fit of the potatoes which he planted, so long as the others had had an opportunity of growing them which they themselves had not considered unfair, and more especially if they still have such an opportunity. If they are going to take the potatoes against his will they might as well have denied his liberty to grow them; even a landlord will seldom deny you liberty to grow potatoes on "his" land so long as you do not claim liberty to eat or keep them. If they are going to acknowledge

his right to the use of his own interior forces, surely when these forces are embodied in exterior matter they had better think twice before interfering. Even though his title to the raw material be not tied up in the red tape of exactitude, I should think that lovers of liberty would admit his claim at least so long as the sources of his raw material were still open to them.

Mark you, I say in any LEGITIMATE way. A man has a fair and reasonable claim, I should think, to the stick which he cuts and shapes so long as he wishes to use it as an instrument of support. Once his labor is embodied therein, I, for one, would willingly allow him the right of walking with it, lending or exchanging it; but if he attempted to rob me by using it as an instrument of coercion I should not hesitate to take it from him, if able, without bothering myself in the least as to how he acquired it. In like manner I should recognise the right of a man who made a spade to use it as an instrument of production, to dig with it, to lend or exchange it. If I borrowed it I should see nothing unreasonable in his asking me to compensate him for its wear and tear or to replace it if I wore it out; but whenever he attempted to rob me by using it as an instrument of exploitation I would consider myself entitled, if need be, to deal with the spade just as with the stick of the other would-be thief. The highwayman and the monopolist are equally thieves so far as results are concerned; if you do not submit to their demand of something for nothing they both threaten you with suffering or death, and that the one is enabled to do through his possession of an instrument of production and a big stock of bread, the other through his possession of an instrument of destruction and a little piece of lead. We may acknowledge the right of appropriation as needful for the free exercise of the individual's faculties; we must draw the line when he attempts to gain possession of the faculties of other people. We acknowledge it because it is conducive to liberty, and only so far as it is so. We retract when it begins to be conducive to slavery. The man who attempts to exploit, whatever he may say, does not want liberty and property, but licence and monopoly. The existence of mere "property" does not sufficiently account for the fact that the great bulk of us have not got any.

My contention is, then, that as regards those things which are obtained only by labor the essential thing is liberty to MAKE, not to TAKE. Still, I quite understand that in a community where he was free to take whatever he wanted, nobody grumbling, a man would have a liberty fuller than he could have in one where he had to arrange first with the producers; just as he can have greater freedom in the society of his friends than he can have among strangers. But he cannot very well accuse the strangers of aggression or invasion because they deny him the familiarities to which his friends never think of objecting. A man would have fuller liberty, for instance, if he were free to take a kiss and a lock of her hair from any woman he met; but for him to insist on that against her will, even on the theory that a woman's lips and hair were really the product of society, would certainly be no extension of liberty as we understand it.

It is possible that comrade Bevington may take no exception to all this, and I daresay the difference between ultra-Communists like comrade Bevington and those Anarchists who content themselves with preaching the abolition of monopoly is, to some extent, a matter of words differently used; nevertheless, it seems to me that to insist as she does on the absolute necessity of an unbalanced Communism is a serious mistake from the propagandist point of view. It seems to me that when comrade Bevington asserts that "property, however acquired, must maintain itself by governmental force," she gives away our Anarchist position altogether. If a man's potatoes cannot be protected from the other who attempts to take them against the will of the owner except by governmental force, what about a woman's person? Physical force might sometimes be necessary to protect the one as much as the other, but I know comrade Bevington does not object to physical force so long as it is not used for the purpose of aggression.

I don't, for my part, believe that violence would be necessary in an Anarchist society to defend the right of (non-monopolistic) property any more than it would be needed to defend any other right generally recognised. A man's potatoes and a woman's person, the one as well as the other, "property" in both receiving the general acknowledgment of the community, would be protected, partly by men's social instincts, partly by the hold which society has over the individual through the necessities of his social relations, and partly by the readiness of the owner to resist and of others to help in that resistance.

It is true that these are not always sufficient just now, because our social instincts are stunted by class and other inequalities, because our social relations are in many cases both loose and scanty (what social relations has a tramp, for example?), and because in our long submission to the State most of us have been policed into helplessness and sheepish cowardice. These things will be altered in an Anarchist society. Moreover, in an Anarchist society we shall have no men condemned to starvation through monopoly in the means of production or exclusion from the land, and none condemned to celibacy through poverty or a false and superstitious sexual morality. When a man who wants potatoes gets a chance to grow them or to produce something else with which to obtain them by exchange, when a man with strong sexual instincts need not hesitate to look for a woman who cares to be his companion, there can be no doubt he will find it pleasanter and better to gratify his desires in a legitimate way rather than in a way which will cause the loss of his self-respect, expose him to the stings of remorse, the contempt and aversion of his fellows, perhaps to the loss of those benefits which he derives from their society and help, and a way which, after all, will seldom offer much less trouble and difficulty, but generally more.

Such a protection would not, however, like the present governmental one, be a protection of the exploiter, but a protection against him.

Depending for the security of his property on the goodwill of his fellows, which will only be granted on the general recognition that the "property" is *not* being used for exploitation, the possessor of wealth which he does not care to consume immediately, though he may not always be willing to give it away (for a while, at least, that is hardly likely), will always be willing to lend it to those who wish to use it, without making any attempt at usury and merely on condition that they return or replace when wanted. Nay, instead of demanding usury, I should think it likelier that he would be willing to pay a premium by way of inducing them to accept the trouble and responsibility. Capitalism will disappear with governmentality; and, free from the coercive State, we shall have nothing to fear from the producer's possession of his product.

T. H. BELL.

* "The programme of German Socialism," Forum Library, New York, April, 1895, page 28.

"Theoretically the State is a protector of the rights of subjects; practically the State continually plays the part of aggressor."—HERBERT SPENCER.

CORRESPONDENCE.

COMRADES:

Between now and next August twelvemonth we have no time to lose in rallying and preparing our forces for the International Congress of 1896; therefore I would impress upon all comrades the importance of starting at once to do propaganda of some description, either individually or collectively, so that when the thinking workers of the world have their attention turned to the coming Congress they will see that Anarchy is a growing force that all parties, political or otherwise, will in future have to reckon with. The question arises, of course, as to which is the best method of propaganda to pursue. Well, that each comrade must decide for himself. Nevertheless, I would strongly urge every one who is a member of a Trade-union to work from within. The advisability of Anarchists adopting this method has been clearly demonstrated at the Brussels and Zurich Congresses: in fact, it is absolutely necessary if we are to make a firm stand against Social-Democratic bossing at these congresses.

To those who cannot see their way clear to do this I would like to point out that there are a thousand other ways by which they can make themselves instrumental in propagating our principles; such as taking part in discussions in the workshop, lecture hall, coffee shop, tramcar, Labour Church, etc., selling and distributing literature, or having chats with shopmates and friends. This suggestion might seem paltry to some at first sight, but upon investigation it will be found that a tremendous amount of good work can be done in this way. The "scientific Socialists" (?) have already started their intrigues for the Congress of 1896: Dr. Aveling, who is a member of the organising committee, says that he "has instructions to prevent any but those believing in political action being present."

Any comrade who knows Dr. Aveling knows that he is the English agent of the German Marxist party and one of the most intolerant of all the opponents of Anarchism. His statement alone ought to be sufficient to urge even the most sluggish comrade to use his energy in channels similar to those mentioned above.

London, May 6th.

WILLIAM BANHAM.

To the Editor of *Freedom*.

KILL THE MONEY MONOPOLY FIRST.

Your invitation, in the May *Freedom*, of criticism, suggestions and questions is so cordial and apparently sincere that I venture to make at once a criticism and a suggestion.

Hitherto I have been unsuccessful, after several attempts, to discover how far the Communist Anarchist and the Individualist Anarchist can co-operatively carry on the campaign for the abolition of all governments, and the realization of its consequent corollary, the Sovereignty of the Individual, which last I consider to be the inevitable implication of Anarchism. But it has seemed that at the very outset of our journey we must part company, each prosecuting his end by a totally different method. The Communist Anarchist sees nothing for it but an education in Communism, pending the period when all the workers shall arise against the monopolists, expropriate all existing wealth, and settle down into trade guilds, freely organized, with production and consumption upon the Necessity basis.

On the other hand, the Individualist Anarchist (confound the tautology!) immediately dissents, claiming that there is a much safer, sooner and surer remedy. He sees that the existence of an unemployed class, resulting from an artificial glut in the labor market, is caused by the inability of the laborer to purchase an equivalent to that which he produces, being compelled to leave the greater portion of his products in the hands of the monopolist to cover Rent, Interest, Profit and Taxation. Now, of these four historical thieves, interest is by far the most potent and disastrous. Mr. J. Holt Schooling, Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society, recently demonstrated mathematically that one penny invested at the beginning of Anno Domini 1, at five per cent per annum compound interest, would have amounted in 1895 to fifty-nine sextillions of pounds sterling, or to a mass of gold twenty-five million times the size of the earth! This freak in mathematics was worked out in the *Strand Magazine* for last January. But how many pennies have been invested since the year 1, A. D.?

Such is the strangling power of interest through the money monopoly; and, seeing this, the Individualist Anarchist proposes to vanquish Usury by the establishment of Mutual Banks, issuing paper money upon all good security, free of interest, plus a small charge for working expenses. This would free the enormous amount of capital now idle, cause a great demand for labor and, consequently, an increase of consumption, which again would increase the demand for labor until the unemployed should be absorbed; and then, but not till then, could the laborer successfully demand the full results of his labor.

As to the illegality of Mutual Banking, we reply: "So much the greater necessity to propagate the idea. The only to abolish laws is to ignore them, and when a sufficient number of people determine to organize a system of exchange regardless of the law it dies."

My criticism is that Free Communism is far away (behind or ahead, as you like it); and, granting all that its advocates may claim as to its benefits, its practical realization is only possible by spontaneous, momentary and catastrophic sundering from the present system. Now, such immediate change is not according to the methods of Nature and is not in a line with Evolution. My suggestion is that Anarchist Communists should examine the theory of Mutual Banking with an unprejudiced mind, so that, even if they do not comprehend its real importance, they may be enabled to offer a few more intelligent objections than those which have been put forward recently, and especially in the manifesto pamphlet issued by the Torch Group.

To those who abhor palliatives we may say that Mutual Banking is a palliative without compromise, not a political but an economic palliative, and also a means for the realization of our best hopes.

WILLIAM J. ROBINS.

THE PROPAGANDA.

REPORTS.

Sunderland and District.—Of the many parts of this country that have been neglected, owing to the lack of speakers, the North-East corner stands prominent. Yet, in spite of this much-regretted fact, Anarchism has adherents in several industrial centres on the Tyne. Of late years the labor war has raged as fiercely in this district as in any part of the country; this is proved by the Pattern-makers and Moulders Strike of last year, and the several large strikes of miners in Northumberland and Durham during the past three years. This has been the means of demonstrating to the more intelligent workers the utter hopelessness of trusting to Trades-unionism on present lines as a means of improving their condition, with the result that their attention has been turned to the consideration of more advanced ideas.

It is really encouraging for any comrade to visit this district; no matter what town you may go to you can always rely on finding an enthusiastic audience of intelligent workers ready to give you a fair hearing and invest a few coppers in papers or pamphlets. Last year a few good meetings were held at the "Wheat-sheaf" in Sunderland which did much to remove the superstitious belief in government. About two months ago W. K. Hall (of Manchester) came here in

search of employment, and addressed several meetings and sold a good lot of literature in various surrounding towns, including South Shields Newcastle and West Stanley. On Sunday, May 12th, comrade Banham (of London) addressed a large crowd at Gill Bridge Avenue in the morning, sold all the papers that we had brought out and made a fair collection; no opposition either from the I. L. P. or the police, several of each party being present but contented themselves with listening to our comrade's address. In the evening several comrades went to South Shields, where we held an enormous meeting in spite of the dull evening; comrade Banham spoke for an hour and a half, several questions were asked at the close in a very friendly spirit and were satisfactorily answered by our comrade. Here, too, our literature sold like wildfire. On Tuesday evening, May 14th, a meeting was held at Gateshead; comrade James opened, followed by Banham; the weather was unsuitable for a meeting but we made a good impression on the audience.

C. A. IRA.

Canning Town.—We are still "shirking our responsibility," as the S. D. F. term it, by renewed activity now the fine weather has set in. During the last month we sold 16 quires of papers besides pamphlets, so, by that, I should say our ideas are spreading. We have made several more converts and, at the rate our numbers are increasing, we shall soon be the strongest organisation in Canning Town. On Sunday, May 19th, we sold 6 quires of papers and collected 9s. 1½d.; on the 26th we sold 5 quires and the collection was 6s. 9d.: the figures speak for themselves. We find that the best way to sell our literature is to read extracts to the people, and they purchase them readily enough.

We have, also, held meetings with Leggett in Victoria Park; literature sold fairly well. We have, likewise, opened up a new station at Barking, where we are looked forward to very eagerly by the people, numbers coming to the station to meet us and grabbing at our papers as if they were hot cakes. The local papers devoted nearly half a column to the Anarchist meetings in the Broadway. Taken altogether, we think we have good soil to work upon, many people have remarked that our lecturers are the best they have ever heard on the social question; we had some opposition from a parson who had been a man-of-war's man, now he is a man of peace, at least he says so; but the so-called Christians are mad because the people will listen to us instead of taking their chloroform; they see that people want heaven down here and not somewhere beyond the moon. Directly they came on the scene they pitched close to us and began to bray; the leader of the orchestra could roar, but he soon choked himself, he could not shout Leggett down.

Up to the present we have had Leggett, Kitz, Banham and Bruce assisting to carry on the propaganda at Barking; the comrades from Canning Town turning up in strong force week after week in case of emergency. Hunter Watts came down for the S. D. F. on the 26th, so we all used the one platform to preach the gospel of discontent. We are distributing so much literature lately, in the shape of leaflets, that we have to keep our old press going a good many hours; if other groups will throw as much energy into the movement as we are doing, when the revolution does come they will find more on the side of freedom than they once dreamed of.

R. P.

Edinburgh.—The fact that we have sent no report since the middle of last summer must be put down to the laziness supposed to be natural to the Anarchist Communist and, not by any means to our having fallen asleep. Our last summer's propaganda wound up with surprising success (surprising to the enemy, anyhow). At our meetings in the Meadows, alone, we sold during the summer about 2,500 papers and pamphlets. And our two principal speakers were, one of them an old man and the other an invalid. We were greatly helped, however, by comrades from Glasgow and Aberdeen, and by occasional visitors from the South. Towards the end, too, we had every assistance given us by the press and the police.

Ben Clark and Tom Bell were arrested one night at an open-air meeting, just at a time when we were working the papers for all they worth. But the police had been in such a hurry that they forgot to arrange for "independent" witnesses. At the station the constables lied with a vigour and imaginative power which augured well for their promotion, and they actually brought in to support them a kindly-disposed but inebriated bystander who was pushing himself forward as a witness for us. It was a stroke of genius, but he was too far gone and had to be ejected for cheeking the inspector; so they were glad to let the matter drop. On their release our comrades were surprised to find a big crowd waiting to cheer them; and when we led them off with a song and with banner flying in a triumphal march down the High Street and the Bridge;—many of the respectable citizens no doubt were horrified with the thought that the Revolution had broke loose.

Our Defiance Meeting, two nights later, really did block the street and no mistake. The statement that the police on that occasion joined in the cheering rests on doubtful authority; they did buy literature, for we found several bad French pennies in our takings; and they got us turned out of our committee rooms. For a while afterwards we had a meeting of some sort somewhere every night in the week, and had we been able to secure a hall for the winter in time to announce it then, we could have taken a big one, you bet; but in this kirk-encumbered city where even the highly respectable I. L. P. cannot always get a hall it was only after our open-air work had been given up that we got settled. However, when worked up a bit we got good audiences and have paid our way.

We had Muirhead, Levenson, Blair Smith and Thompson from Glasgow; Duncan and Shepherd, from Aberdeen; and our local comrades John Smith, A. Smith, Hatelie, Bell, Campbell and Robertson.

For this summer, John Smith is not so young as he used to be and will not be able to speak very often; Tom Bell has been in bed all winter and will probably not be able to speak at all; but Robertson and Macgregor have made their debut in most promising style and we have Jack Robb, Angus Doris and W. K. Hall.

On Sunday, May 12th, we held highly successful meetings, quite as good as last year, so that things are going on swimmingly. Hall left afterwards on a propagandist tour to the North, tramping and paying his own expenses by selling old numbers of Anarchist papers; we cannot, of course, afford, like the I. L. P., £3 10s. for a weeks lecturing, with lodging and expenses paid. B.

FREEDOM PAMPHLETS.

No. 1.—The Wage System. By Peter Kropotkin. 1d.

No. 3.—A Talk about Anarchist-Communism Between Two Workers. By E. Malatesta. 1d.

No. 4.—Anarchist Communism: Its Basis and Principles. By Peter Kropotkin. 1d.

No. 7.—Expropriation. By Peter Kropotkin.

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