

# Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

VOL. X.—No. 111.

DECEMBER, 1896.

MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

## CO-OPERATION:

### A Reply to Herbert Spencer.

By P. KROPOTKIN.

HERBERT SPENCER has just brought out the third and last volume of his *Principles of Sociology*, and in one of the closing chapters devoted to "Industrial Institutions," he evidently had to touch upon co-operation. So he did, and he came to a proposal concerning the mode of carrying on productive co-operation, which proposal he thought important enough to communicate in advance to the veteran co-operator, Mr. G. J. Holyoake. It was published in the October issue of *Labor Co-Partnership*.

Coming as it does from the evolutionist philosopher, and representing what Herbert Spencer arrived at after so many years' work in Sociology, it deserves our full attention. It shows where a philosopher—well-meaning, but having spent his life amidst books, and imbued, moreover, with the religion of Wagedom and of "reward proportional to merit"—could come to: what his last word of wisdom is.

Fully recognising the importance of labor co-partnerships, which represent a higher form of industrial organisation, Herbert Spencer proposes to substitute piece-work for time-wages in these co-partnerships; and to this change, if it only would take place, he attributes grand effects. At the present time, he says, the workers and the employers in industrial co-partnerships have a prejudice against piece-work, and this prejudice is quite natural and justified when the head of the concern is a private employer (which he shows why). But in a co-partnership, where each worker receives a share in the profits, proportionately to his wages, all advantages are in favor of piece-work. Each worker being doubly interested in producing more, the productive power of the concern would be greatly increased, and the control and the administration would be diminished. "Jealousies among the workmen disappear. A cannot think his remuneration too low as compared with that of B, since each is now paid just as his work brings. Resentment against a foreman who ranks some above others no longer finds any place. Overlooking to check idleness becomes superfluous: the idling almost disappears, and another cause of dissension ceases." And so on.

Then a further development is named: "Where the things are so large and perhaps complex (as in machinery) that an unaided man becomes incapable, work by the piece may be taken by groups of members." The Cornish miners do so. The work "is put up to auction and bid for by different gangs of men, who undertake the work as co-operative piece-work, at so much per fathom."

And then Spencer gives a full column to show the advantages of that sort of work. . . . "The transition from the compulsory co-operation of militancy to the voluntary co-operation of industrialism is completed." . . . The day-wage worker is now coerced, "but under the arrangement described his activity becomes voluntary." . . . More than that—using Henry Maine's expression—"the transition from *status* (coercive State) to contract reaches its limit"; coercion has vanished, and "the system of contract becomes unqualified." . . . "the entire organisation is based on contract, and each transaction is based on contract." Reward is proportionate to merit, both adjusting themselves.

The only regret of Herbert Spencer is that mankind has not attained that higher type of nature; that such high-type industrial institutions "are possible only with the best men"! But they will come. A few examples of the sort—and "admission into them would be the goal of the working-class ambition." So far Spencer.

Now, it is always refreshing in our times, when the military utopias of German Socialism have such an ascendancy, to meet with a philosopher who seeks for a solution of the present miseries in free agreement, in each transaction being based on contract. At a time when we are told—and compelled to recognise under the penalty of ostracism—that the ideal of social organisation is an "army" of workers severely "disciplined" and obeying the word of a "dictatorial chief," or of a group of chiefs, it is extremely satisfactory to see Spencer remaining true to the principle of free agreement, which he found to be the moving power of evolution at large, and which he now tries to apply even to the details of social organisation.

But Spencer seems not to know that what he advocates as the highest development of co-partnership is already practised, for hundreds of years since, by millions and millions of most ordinary men. More than that. Just because these men know the institution of "co-operative piece-work" from a very long experience, they continually abandon in it the principle of "reward proportionate to merit" within their own co-operations—probably because they have been convinced by experience

of the impossibility of carrying this principle through, and find that far from being *justice*, as Spencer believes, it is a crying *injustice*.

A few instances, all taken from Russia, where the subject has been best explored, will better explain this idea.\*

Millions of acres of land are rented in Russia by village-communities. Also meadows. When the community comes to mow a meadow, all men and women come out. It is a village *fête*. All mowers start in a row, and the ambition of every one of them is to leave the others behind: to do more work than the others. Women rack the cut grass and arrange it in heaps of equal size. In the evening, or next day, lots are cast, and each family takes one heap. The feeling of justice of the peasants does not admit that the tallest and strongest man should take more hay than the others. All have worked according to their forces—all are equally rewarded.

But a still higher form is also in existence. When scarcity prevails, the division of the produce is made *according to the needs*. Although all have worked according to their forces, the division of the produce is made according to the number of "eaters" (of mouths) in each family. This form prevailed during the last famine, where relief was earned by village-work, or received from outside. And, what was still more remarkable, the debt contracted in this last case had to be repaid by each family according to the numbers of "workers" (working units) in the family—not of its mouths. A family consisting of two workers and four children, for instance, received six parts of flour, but it had to repay only two parts.

This being the two highest forms of distribution of the produce, all possible and imaginable forms, in thousands of varieties, exist in both the village communities, and the fishing, wood-cutting, carrying, railway porters and industrial *artels*, which count hundreds of thousands and cover the whole life of the working part of the Russian nation.

Thus—to take but one instance—a railway and the wooden stations along it have to be built. If the contractor, or sub-contractor, cares in the least to have good work done, he treats, not with individual workers, but with *artels* (or gangs of from 50 to 250 men) of navvies and of carpenters. The bargain is certainly not so mechanical as an auction, because the qualities of the different bidding *artels* are taken into account. But once the work has been undertaken by a gang the contractor has nothing to do with the distribution of the earnings. They will be distributed in this *artel* in one way, in another *artel* in a different way—the ill ones always being provided for. The grouping of the *artel* being free, every member knows in advance how the distribution will take place in that gang.

One would spend his life in studying the different types of remuneration—piece work, day work, merit and no merit, in thousands of combinations which no genius could foretell or foresee, but which popular life works out on the spot, in accordance with the conditions of a given work. The same variety exists here as in the working out of animal species, and it is due to the same variety of causes.

And there is not one single branch of popular, agricultural, industrial, and commercial life in which like *artels* should not exist. Peasants form and dissolve them every day—for consumption and distribution. Fishing is done by *artels*, including sometimes a whole territory (the Ural cossacks). The domestic trades (and they occupy 7,000,000 workers) are honey-combed with such co-operations. Nay, the railway porters, the privileged dock laborers who have permanent employment, the men who load and unload the goods on the exchanges (a highly privileged class), the carriers, the messengers in towns, and so on, are all organised in *artels*. In St. Petersburg you call an *artelstchik* of the Town Messengers' *Artel*, you give him a packet containing £1000, and tell him to carry it to Mr. So-and-So—and usually no receipt is taken: the messenger belongs to an *artel*, and that is enough! In all private banks the keys and seals of the cash-boxes are in the hands of a special *artel*. And so on.

If Spencer knew man, we could take his words relative to the "higher type of institutions" which are "possible only with the best men" as highly complimentary to the Russian nation. But the fact is that the Russian (especially, the Great Russian) worker and peasant are imbued with that spirit and carry on the *artel* principle into every nook of their lives—not because they are the best men. They do so simply because the village-community has not yet been wrecked by the State, and they carry on into industrial life the spirit of the institution which makes the essence of the agricultural life of the nation.

\* Those who wish to know more about the subject ought to consult the article "Artels" (Russian name for such co-operations) in Meyer's or in Brockhaus's *Conversations-Lexikon*, where they will find the name of an elaborate German work on the subject. Some Russian works dealing with the subject are named in the article "Russia" in *Encyclopædia Britannica*.



Why, then, is the working part of the Russian nation, taken as a whole, even more miserable than the working parts of the West European nations?

To this we shall answer in our next number. But we can, already here, indicate our answer in a few words:—"Simply because the *distribution of earnings*, amongst workers who produce for themselves and not for a capitalist, is the least difficulty in the Social Question. When Wagedom is not imposed from above, the workers find out, and work out, thousand new forms of sharing the earnings, more equitable than piece-wages or time-wages."

Like most middle-class writers who know little of the workers, Herbert Spencer, spite of all the force of his genius, was dragged to inquire into "What is to be done to prevent workers from taking each other by the throat when they come to distribute the fruits of their labor? What is to be done to prevent idleness among them?" While the whole of the Social Question lies elsewhere—namely, in "How can the workers become enabled to produce for themselves?" When they will have that, they will find much better means of an equitable sharing of the fruits of their labor than those which any man of genius could find out for them in advance. (To be continued.)

## WILLIAM MORRIS.

By EDWARD CARPENTER.\*

I THINK that future times will look back upon William Morris as one of the finest figures of this century. In the midst of an era of finesse, sleekness, commercial dodgery, their eyes will rest with relief upon this brusque, hearty, bold, and manly form.

It is not so much perhaps in the special immortality of any of his works that his greatness will lie, as (what is more) in the man himself. For, after all, Life is greater than Art; and the greatest of all artworks is the genuine expression of his own true heart which a man finds and forges for himself out of the materials of the time into which he is born. Morris stood up from the first against the current of ugly, dirty commercialism in which his lot was cast—like a man in the midst of a stream fighting against the stream, like a captain in the rout of his men withstanding the torrent of their flight and turning them back to the battle.

He hated with a good loyal hatred all insincerity; but most he hated, and with his very soul, the ugliness and meanness of modern life. I believe that was the great inspiring hatred of his life.

Everyone has remarked the contrast between the man himself—energetic, stormy, a veritable Viking and sea-captain—and his poetry, so languid, so dreamy, so dainty of expression. Perhaps, as he himself seems to have said, he was several personalities rolled into one; but it is not difficult, I think, to see how the peculiar note of his literary work was given by the fact that it was written largely as a *relief* from his surroundings. After spending his days in organising a large business, with all its irritating commercial details; after enduring polite imprisonment in the mansion of some lordling who required his æsthetic advice; after shouting himself hoarse at a street-corner; after battling with the police in Trafalgar Square; or after suffering the slings and arrows of outrageous vulgarity in all the sights and sounds of daily life; it was an intense relief, a real holiday, to him to sit down at night and dream himself back perhaps into the fourteenth century, or forward into the reflective image of it in years to come. I believe that the main part of Morris's literary work—such books as *News from Nowhere*, *The Roots of the Mountains*, *A Dream of John Ball*, *The Earthly Paradise*—came in this way, were written simply for his own recreation, and as an escape from actual conditions; and perhaps it is this which gives them their almost sluggish sense of quietude and beauty, as of a stream which, having fretted itself in its fierce descent among the rocks, meanders at length and at large among the iris-fringed meadows. His speeches, indeed, were a trump of battle, but his imaginative writings moved in the calm of dreamland.

And it is very characteristic of Morris that his chief recreation was only another kind of work. He could not understand that form of pleasure which consists in loafing your days away at a watering-place. A touch of gout in his constitution is the key to much of his character—his irritable, restless energy, his immense power of work, his sudden blazes of temper, his downrightness, sincerity, and hatred of all meanness. When ill, he was a difficult patient to keep in bed. At meals even it would happen that he could not sit still, but, jumping up from the table and talking vehemently, would quarterdeck the room.

One of the last times that I heard him speak in public was in 1889, at the Paris Socialist Congress. After the glib oratorical periods of Jules Guesde and others, what a contrast to see Morris—in navy-blue pilot suit—fighting furiously there on the platform with his own words (he was not feeling well that day), hacking and hewing the stubborn English phrases out—his tangled grey mane tossing, his features reddening with the effort! But the effect was remarkable. Something in the solid English way of looking at things, the common-sense and practical outlook on the world, the earnestness and tenacity, as of a skipper beating up against wind and wave on the great deep, made that speech one of the most effective in the session.

There is no doubt that, in the early days of the Socialist League, Morris had a hope, and a strong hope, that the little branches of the League, spreading and growing over the land, would before long reach

hands to each other and form a network of free communal life over the whole country. That dream was not realised; but the impulse of growth which he gave has nevertheless been one of the most potent, most generous and humanly beautiful, of all the many impulses which have gone to make up that very complex and far-reaching movement which we call by the name of modern Socialism.

Now to think that he has gone from among us brings a strange tightening and pressure of the affections. To hundreds and thousands of unknown toilers and workers by land and sea, and all over the earth, he was and is the object of a real love; and it is at least some poor consolation that, if in the old form we miss him, still in the hearts of men and women thus multiplied his image moves and lives, and will live.

## REMINISCENCES OF WILLIAM MORRIS.

By A WORKING COLLEAGUE.

TO THE refined and cultured in society, Morris would undoubtedly find a place in the front rank of the celebrities of the age as a poet and artist, but to the mass of the people, even of his own country, his would be a comparatively unknown name. No one knew better than Morris himself that, even if the mass had the means at hand to procure his poetical works, the leisure and frame of mind necessary to enjoy them would be wanting.

I remember on one Saturday in the early days of the Socialist League when our Comrade Kitz was arrested at the Grove, Stratford, for causing an "obstruction." I went to the office of the S.L. in Farringdon Road and informed the members—who were having a social evening at the hall—of the arrest, and that we wanted bail. Carruthers and Morris left at once with me, and when we arrived at West Ham Police Station I introduced them to the inspector on duty as the sureties for Kitz's appearance on the following Monday.

The officer put the question: "What is your name?" Our comrade answered, "William Morris."

"What are you?" queried the officer. But before Morris could reply to this question, Carruthers stepped up to the desk, and in a vehement manner said: "Don't you know? Why, this is the author of 'The Earthly Paradise.'"

Morris turned to his friend with an astonished look and said: "Good heavens, Carruthers! you don't expect a *policeman* to know anything about 'The Earthly Paradise,' do you?" And turning to the inspector said: "I am a shopkeeper, carrying on business in Oxford Street."

The *shopkeeper's* name was good enough, and I doubt whether the poet's would have been any better than my own, even to one so high in the ranks of the workers as an inspector of the police.

But, indeed, we need not come so low down as even a police inspector in order to find this ignorance, for we know that magistrates have displayed it on the bench, and men laying claim to be journalists have shown it in the press.

We had an instance of this during the struggle for freedom of speech at Dodd Street, Burdett Road. Several arrests had been made at the meeting on one Sunday in September, 1885. On the Monday following a great number attended at Thames Police Court to know the result, Morris being one of them. In the course of the day the police—acting undoubtedly under orders from their bosses—succeeded in ruffling his temper by their illtreatment of Mrs. Aveling, and being then handled pretty roughly himself by two or three stalwart young policemen, it was suggested by someone present that the police should be summoned for assault. This was instantly turned to account by these "guardians of the peace," and Morris was arrested and charged with "assaulting the police."

Saunders, the presiding magistrate, in the course of the hearing of the case, asked the usual question:

"What is your name?"

"William Morris."

"What are you?" further queried the stipendiary.

For once Morris was brought by the ignorance of the magistrate to deviate from his usual modesty, and replied:

"Well, I am a poet and an artist, and I think pretty well known all over Europe."

This answer probably struck terror into the heart of the poor old dunderhead, the result being that the charge was dismissed. The press of the day openly admitted that, had the charge been made against a workingman, he would certainly have been imprisoned; and that, had Saunders known with whom he had to deal, he would not have allowed the case to proceed as far as it did.

Whether well known to all the world besides, he certainly was unknown within the sacred precincts of a police court even in his own town.

A good cartoon was issued at the time by *Funny Folks* with the police blacking Morris's boots.

It was in reporting this case for the press that the "journalist" described Morris as the author of the "Paradise League."

Can anything be more deplorable than the thought that it is possible to come even lower in the scale than this? And yet we have only to look among the small shop-keeping class to find it.

I was in the United States of America when Dickens died, and a very short time afterwards a grocer whom I knew here—and who had become bankrupt—came out to the States. In the first conversation we had, I felt anxious to know something as to the feeling displayed on the death of so well known a man; and having asked him, he said: "Dickens? Dickens? Was he in the provision line or the general grocery?"

\* For appreciations of William Morris by Walter Crane, P. Kropotkin, J. C. Kenworthy, and others of his old comrades see *Freedom* for November last.



And this is the kind of education we receive in the "most highly civilised country in the world."

As an artist, he would be still less known to the mass. With our cheap press it is possible for a great number of the workers to enjoy the fruits of the imagination of "an idle singer of an empty day," but to speak of art under the brutal degradation brought about by commercialism is altogether beyond our imagination.

(To be continued.)

S. MAINWARING.

### 3rd October, 1896

Died at Hammersmith: WILLIAM MORRIS, apostle of Freedom and teacher of social regeneration.

O gloomy London, deeper is this day thy gloom!  
What little light was thine is swallow'd by the tomb:  
His, blotted now, which, though a beacon bright,  
Could scarcely pierce thy deep ignoble night.  
O town of coward hearts, thou never know'st thy brave!  
O town of blasted hopes, thou see'st not whom can save!  
Thy saviours call in vain! thy prophets' thanks are stones!  
Thy voice is futile curses outdinning feeble groans!  
This son to-day thou lovest, unnoted, most unknown,  
What harvest hast thou garner'd from truth his hands have sown!  
O faithless, fruitless city! thou serf of shameless fraud!  
Thou sycophant to losels, what lies thy palms applaud!  
Thou haunt of earth's exploiters, what millions curse thy name!  
Thou Rome, without Rome's courage, abysmal is thy shame!  
Thy senate is the syndicate of gambling lords of gold,  
Which continents hath ravag'd and nations bought and sold!  
Thy forum is the market! thy temple is the bank!  
Thy consuls and thy tribunes by plunder earn their rank!  
Heed, universal spoiler! lest repentance come too late,  
And the fatal cry is sounded "The Gaul is at the gate!"  
Weep, weep, for him who show'd thee a higher life and law,  
For him who would have led thee to wage a nobler war,  
For one whose like thou little art like to see again,  
Who midst thee was indeed a man in an age of mimic men!

LOTHROP WITHINGTON.

9, Coptic Street, W.C.

[\*\* Owing to the fact no proof was sent to Withington last month of his poem on Morris, some errors have occurred which affect the sense of it. We think it therefore only fair to reprint here the poem in its entirety.—ED.]

## ARMENIA and EUROPE.

The country ruined, devastated, towns plundered, villages burnt, the sinister light of conflagration illuminating sorrowful scenes of carnage; children buried alive, sometimes their little heads, as gentle as those of the angels of Murillio, dashed against the glowing walls; young girls and women violated before being decapitated and even disembowelled; peaceful, inoffensive men strangled by thousands at a time; all these horrors premeditated, coolly organised, carried out and repeated with a diabolical *sang-froid* by the government composed of renegades of all nationalities, races and religions—this country, do you know it, reader?

Already for three years those horrors, which disgrace civilized humanity, have been constantly developing. The monsters, called sovereigns and ministers, are methodically feasting upon the flesh and blood of the Armenians. Cowardly and cruel, like his eunuchs, this sovereign, the Sultan, is a stranger to all humane feelings. By his birth, by his depraved morals he is well adapted to the rôle of assassin without a rival. Without the least encouragement from outside, he was ever ready to fill his dominions with horrors. When, however, he saw that his presents, covered with the blood of Armenian children, were graciously received by a newly-married Imperial couple, and that he himself is distinguished for his abominable exploits, and presented with the family portrait of another imperial house, then it became clear to him that his profession of assassin was not, after all, so damnable, and that if for a private individual it was disgraceful to kill his fellow-creature, for him and for his "fellow-sovereigns" the killing of children, young girls and women constituted an honorable act. Along with him, his ministers, those ignoble creatures who have made their career by prostituting their bodies while young to the potentates and in their virile age, by receiving as an honor and as a wife an odalisk, abused, cast-off and repudiated by their master\*—these depraved scoundrels have in their turn understood that their rôle of statesmen meant to be cruel to the extreme. They have understood at the same time that their assassin-in-chief, encouraged in his bloody exploits by the imperial courts, will know, in his turn, how to reward their zeal as hangmen. Therefore, they intend massacring and pillaging the inoffensive without anybody to interfere, and that the phantom of European intervention to suppress their work of extermination of the unfortunate Armenian nation is an old fable "good enough to tell" to the children, the priests, and the sentimental women of England.

They are right, these ignorant and prostituted assassins. Yes, the intervention of Europe at the end of the nineteenth century is a fable. In times gone by, when Europe was not yet filled with police, and the people had courage and individual initiative, it sufficed that a monk—Peter the Hermit—appealed for succour for these same Armenians then massacred by the same Turks, and thousands of men of heart gathered under the flag of the crusade. They were encouraged and blessed by their mothers, their wives, their sisters, and their sweethearts. Yes,

\* Those who lived at Constantinople will know that our statement is an absolute truth.

barbarian Europe of the Middle Ages, when it took months to get to Palestine or to Cilicia, knew how to make sacrifices. And our refined generation, with our formidable means of transport, is so vile, and is good for nothing else but prayers! . . . The pernicious discipline of obligatory militarism has too much stupefied us, it has deprived us of the least trace of a will, of individual initiative. We are neither capable to will, nor to act, nor to love passionately, nor even to hate monsters who disgrace humanity. We are waiting for our masters and their servants—the diplomatists—to act. The masters, however, fraternise with the abominable assassin. . . . Diplomacy! was there ever a time in history when diplomacy served for any other purpose but the enslavement of the nations? And yet we are assured that it will save the half-exterminated Armenian nation! How has it come about that public opinion in Europe, as well as, on the other hand, the unfortunate Armenian patriots, have put their hopes in diplomatic action? As if it were not the diplomats at Berlin, in 1878, who assured the brave and honest patriarch Hrimian, called "hairik" (father) by the Armenians, that "His Imperial Majesty the Sultan will introduce the necessary reforms in Armenia?! Which are the reforms that were obtained during these last eighteen years? They have organised, according to the style of Paris,† bands of assassins whom they call the police. Is this all? No. The same diplomats watch attentively, for the last years, the abominable exploits of this reformed police, and yet again they promise the Armenians that "His Imperial Majesty the Sultan will introduce the same reforms also in the provinces where the massacres took place, and will organise a constabulary strong enough to suppress" . . . what and whom? Of course, every humanitarian idea so detested by His Majesty the Assassin; and equally, of course, every human being or party of the population that would dare to raise a voice of discontent against their sovereign, this same Sultan. However monstrous this settling of all hopes and expectations of a nation in a strong and omniscient organisation of gendarmery may seem—still, this is a fact. The diplomats, ministers, and rulers of the whole world understand by progress and development the reinforcement of power, the restraint on the personal rights of the people and nation. What wonder then that these gentlemen have placed the liberty and well-being of the Armenian nation at the mercy of the governors and gendarmes, the subordinates of this same assassin on the throne. Their distorted brains, their reactionary routine could not beget anything else. And it is not they who rouse our indignation.

What revolts us is that the foremost public opinion of the European nations, forgetting the historical rôle of diplomacy, could remain passive during two long years of slaughter of the helpless and inoffensive; revolting is the fact that our degenerate race could put their hopes in the innate oppressors of the nations and in the professional adversaries of liberty; revolting it is that, while bands of murderers are slaughtering the defenceless population, the enlightened, humanitarian, and free European society confines itself to prayers, idle talking, or penny donations. . . .

There has not come forth from our midst a Landor, nor a Byron, nor a John Brown, nor a Garibaldi! Among our generation has not been found those throngs of triumphant youths who, with Armand Carrel and Riego fought for liberty in Spain, with Garibaldi in Italy, with the revolutionary peasants in Servia and Bulgaria. . . . We have become too "practical," and, like all "practical" people, too selfish. Even those among us who proclaim the brotherhood of the nations, even the Socialists and revolutionists could not raise themselves above the common level of petty and hard egoism. . . . To the heart-rending moans of the murdered children and women, the gentlemen-orators at the Socialist meetings replied not with a cry of sympathy, not with an act of succour, . . . but with a cold reasoning over the fact that they were not quite happy, and did not roll in riches here. As if solidarity and fraternity constituted the privilege of the fortunate, and as if only the rich could share their bread with those dying of hunger!

No, the rich and the fortunate were always deaf to the suffering. It is just this wherein consists the shameful of the last years of the world's history that the masses of the people left the initiative to the rich, the fortunate, and the powerful. This is just why the bloodthirsty Sultan and his loathsome ministers carry out their bloody exploits upon defenceless Armenia, because Europe has abandoned the traditions of humanitarianism and the fight for human rights, and has left to the rulers the fate of nations and the cause of freedom. And the Sultan knows that these rulers will defend him, and not the people slaughtered by him. And the prayers sent up to the almighty by the priests and women of England, the miserable pennies collected for assistance do not inspire any fear to professional assassins. Not by such an intervention can one hope to put an end to the slaughtering in outraged, pillaged, depopulated Armenia. . . .

Unfortunate country!

Pitiful generation!

W. TCHERKESOV.

† Paragraph 61, Treaty of Berlin.

‡ The police of Constantinople are organised by Parisian commissaries. Its abominable chief, Said Pacha, has received his education at the *cafés chantants* of Paris.

## NOTICES.

*Scottish Groups.*—Comrade J. Perry is visiting Glasgow on December 24th until 3rd January, 1897. He is prepared to lecture in any part of Scotland during that time. For arrangements write him at 7, Lamb's Conduit Street, London, W.C.



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A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

Monthly, One Penny; post free, 1½d.; U.S.A., 3 Cents; France, 15 Centimes.

Annual Subscription, post free, 1s. 6d.; U.S.A., 36 Cents; France, 1fr. 80c.  
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The Editors are not necessarily in agreement with signed articles.

## NOTES.

### A VISIT TO FRED CHARLES AT PORTLAND PRISON.

Friends will be glad to hear something about Fred Charles, whom I saw at Portland on Wednesday last (November 23rd). You climb the great granite rock of Portland, a grey North-Easter blowing, the sea all round, and war-ships lying in the harbour below, the main-land hidden by a fog—a sufficiently dismal prospect on such a day. On the plateau at the top are the prison and the quarries. In the latter, gangs of convicts (ten or a dozen in a gang and watched by warders with guns, one or two to each gang) are working—heavy brutish monotonous faces mostly, and (that is the point of it) made more heavy and brutish every day they stay there. Then on through more armed warders (how afraid society seems to be of its criminals!), through huge fortress walls and gateways, through clamped and locked doors, till there, in the middle of the prison and behind bars strong enough to confine a wild elephant, is the frank face of our friend.

We were allowed 30 minutes interview—the visitor behind bars, the prisoner behind bars, and a warder between us. Charles looked fairly well, I thought, bodily, and not ill-nourished, but in expression the same monotonous look as of a caged animal, though this began to wear away a little after a few minutes. He spoke, as always, hopefully about the future—hoped he should "pull through." Said he was a little depressed when he last wrote, owing to want of sleep; but that was better now. It appears that he is not working at the lathe any longer, but in the general carpenters' shop, which is not so interesting. The trouble is, he said, that there is nothing to interest the mind. It is starved. The same old thoughts go round and round till you are sick to death of them, and still they lead nowhere. There is a library, but the books served out are of the goody-goody kind mostly, and unreadable. However, he has been studying the Greek Grammar lately and finds some interest in that; though not being allowed a lexicon he cannot get very far.

He spoke very feelingly—with tears in his eyes—about Morris. Said he had always looked forward to seeing him again, and asked of course after numbers of old friends. I gave him a lot of messages from different comrades, which no doubt pleased him—especially, as always, any news about his sister, and he seemed cheered up by what I could tell him about them and the movement generally. He begged me to give messages of remembrance to all his friends and comrades.

Then the keys turned in the lock again, and the interview was over—no more visits for him for another three months—and outside the grey north-east wind was blowing, and the warders were still prowling with their guns.

EDWARD CARPENTER.

### THE "BOUNDER'S" PHILOSOPHY.

I shall only be expressing the feelings of a large number of comrades in saying with what a deep sense of loss and of sorrow I heard of the death of W.E. Fay, "The Bounder" of the *Clarion*. Personally frank, unconventional, and generous-hearted, his writings bore the mark of his original character. Though he did not call himself an Anarchist, his writings teem with the Anarchist philosophy and spirit. To quote his own vigorous and piquant language, "The more I see of the world, sir, the more I marvel. By no process of Right Reasoning can you square the Cosmic Circle; or make the 'Mentalities or Corporealities amenable to reasonable rule. We have known persons with No. 9 intellects and No. 9 peripheries—both, singly and collectively—but the result is never what you would reasonably expect. 'Motives! Why do men do and undo things? Why does a man do that o' Monday which he would scout o' Tuesday? Why does a man, if he have a vocation for pessimistic philosophy, become an actor? And so on. We can not reduce the human disposition to any reliable formula; and if we could we should probably be more unhappy than we are. The human disposition is the cause of endless human variety, and furnishes all manners and types of men, from Diogenes to the Grand Old Cackler, which is the spice of existence. Therefore I never grumble at a man for that which he is—so long as he doesn't wantonly tread on my Jubilee corn. By what right of omniscient seeing should I dictate to my fellow creature how he should 'lock his beaver or wear his beard?—'"

His time was short, but he quaffed the cup of life to the full. Good old Bounder! He sleeps the sleep of the just.

Manchester.

ALFRED BARTON.

\* \* Owing to the numerous special reports received this month, we are obliged to hold over several notes, articles, etc.

"Legislators are men who make rules for others and exceptions for themselves."—A. GINGARD.

## CHICAGO MARTYRS COMMEMORATION MEETINGS.

IN LONDON.

The largest and most enthusiastic meeting ever held to commemorate the legal murder of our Chicago comrades in 1887 was held on Wednesday, November 11th, in the Holborn Town Hall.

The large hall was crowded in every part, and the whole of the proceedings passed off in a manner most satisfactory to all interested. There being nothing sensational in the proceedings, the capitalist press naturally did not feel interested to give us any report. All the speakers were attentively listened to, and frequently applauded.

Our thanks are due to the Socialist Choir, which sang excellently "The Laborer's Battle Hymn" and "The March of the the Workers." Miss Elsie Harker gave Parsons' favorite song, "Annie Laurie," so expressively that the repetition of the last verse became necessary in answer to the prolonged applause.

### LETTERS AND TELEGRAMS.

The following communications were then read by Comrade J. Perry:

From Walter Crane:—"I am obliged by the invitation to attend and speak at your meeting, November 11th, but owing to press of other matter I shall not be able to. My views, however, are unchanged upon this event. I have always held that the Chicago martyrs were sacrificed to the interests of capitalism in capital-ridden America, especially Chicago, because they were condemned against the evidence, or on got-up police evidence, and it was never proved that any of them had anything to do with the bomb. They championed the cause of labor. They were in revolt against the system which made places like Chicago possible, but they were no underhand conspirators, but spoke out publicly, and openly carried on their propaganda, and, as the event proved, died for their faith. The American comfortable classes were all against them, and it was as much as anyone's reputation was worth to say a word in their defence when I was there. Henry D. Lloyd, of Chicago, was one of the few noble exceptions, and he has done good work in showing up the ruthlessness of the capitalistic system and its recent developments in America."

From J. C. Kenworthy:—"In answer to your invitation to speak at the meeting in commemoration of the execution of Anarchists at Chicago, to be held Nov. 11, be assured that only a long standing and important engagement prevents me from accepting. I would take this opportunity of declaring that, precisely because I believe in the doctrine of life and society taught in the Gospel, the true Christian doctrine, therefore I do indeed look upon those men murdered under law, nine years ago, as martyrs in the cause of human enlightenment and progress. And this I say, not perhaps agreeing with all those men believed; disagreeing with them, in fact, in any idea they may have held as to the possibility of doing good, of winning freedom, by means of brute force. But, reading the speeches these men were able to make in their defence, I am persuaded that only men could have spoken thus who really sought after better things for humanity. At least, they clearly saw that supreme truth, by sinning against which society remains in its present misery; the truth, namely, that "private property is public robbery." Whatever errors and faults their enemies may prove against these men, those enemies have, by a judicial murder, exalted them into martyrs of a great cause. For, as far as we can judge, no serious crime, or purpose of crime, was proved against these men. No one, I think, could examine the records of the events and escape the conviction that these men were victims of a police plot. And the whole story goes to persuade us that we have, in America as in every civilised country, a vast armed organisation of men, who unscrupulously use deceit, treachery and violence in execution of a misnamed duty of guarding life and property. But this guardianship is a pretence; the police (and the army behind) operate solely in the interests of the governing classes; the power that pays them their wages. We are terrorised by those whom we are taught to style our "protectors." Working in secret, they are supposed to ferret out the crimes of society; but they are themselves the chief criminals. Let us repeat the truth for which the Chicago Anarchists died—that government by force is oppression. And let us give our lives to the principles which will destroy government by force. Let us preach, and above all practice in our relations to all the world, the principles of Equality, Fraternity, and Liberty."

From Keir Hardie:—"If I am not engaged at the East Bradford election until November 11, I am under promise to go to some meetings in the North of Scotland, which will make it quite impossible for me to be with you at your Chicago Martyrs Commemoration meeting. When in Chicago last year, I met two of the men who had been tried and imprisoned in connection with the 'bomb outrage,' as it was termed, and finer specimens of humanity it was never my lot to meet. The universal impression there now is that the whole affair was a police plot."

From Touzeau Parris:—"Have been ill over five weeks, only just on the mend—fear to be out at night at present. Please excuse me to the friends. With regret, and best wishes for your success."

From Mrs. C. P. Stetson:—"I thank you for the invitation to take part in the meeting of November 11, but I shall be out of town on that date, and so unable to attend."

From Errico Malatesta:—"Cannot come because unwell. Very sorry. Greetings to comrades."

"Yorkshire Anarchists send greetings to comrades celebrating Chicago Martyrs. Hurrah for Anarchy!"

"Men die, but principles live. Hurrah for the Social Revolution! Long live Anarchy! Greetings from Liverpool Anarchist-Communist Group."

"Our comrades died that Anarchy might live. Their spirit shall lead us to victory. Hurrah for the Social Revolution!—Manchester Anarchist-Communist Group."

"The Government were strong in killing our men, but weak in attempting to kill the principles they held.—Portsmouth Anarchist-Communist Group."

"The unforgotten dead. Norwich comrades send greetings, and heartily wish success to meeting. Hurrah for Anarchy!"

"For liberty they lived, for liberty they died. It is for us to conquer.—Anarchist Colonists, Clousden Hill Farm, Newcastle-on-Tyne."

"Greetings from Glasgow Anarchists, who join you in commemorating the death of our martyrs. Though the night did apparently overcome them, yet it is their triumph now. Long live Anarchy."

"Greetings from Inverness comrades. The North is awakening."

"We send our best wishes for the success of your meeting, hoping that the lives of the Chicago Martyrs may continue to be celebrated until the ideal they lived and died for becomes an accomplished fact.—Aberdeen Anarchist-Communist Group."

"We send fraternal greetings. Hope your meeting is a great success. 'Let the voice of the people be heard.'—Edinburgh Anarchist-Communist Group."



THE SPEECHES.

Space does not permit us to report in full. We give here therefore the chief points made by the speakers.

J. PERRY said, the execution of the Chicago Anarchists was an international murder, carried out by the agreement of the European powers. Every existing government is prepared to act similarly when its interests are in danger. Spain and France are typical of the day. The Chicago jury was packed, for it was hoped that the execution of these men would mean the suppression of the Socialist movement in America; but hanging men did not destroy principles, and the movement was stronger now in America than ever before, probably on account of the sacrifice that had been made.

JOHN TURNER (recently returned from a lecturing tour in America) said commemoration meetings had been held every year for nine years, but their memory would not have died out even if no meetings had been held. He thought the martyrs would undergo the punishment again if they had the chance for the sake of the cause. He then detailed the circumstances that led to the execution of the martyrs, and showed that they had been the victims of a plot, and that instead of them being dangerous to the community, they were thoroughly honest, lovable men. He quoted passages from their speeches, which were received with loud applause.

LOTHROP WITHINGTON expressed his belief that the martyrs would be looked back upon as the head and front of the movement.

TOM MANN attended the commemoration not merely because the Chicago men were Anarchists or Socialists, but because they were clear-headed rebels against the existing state of society. So dreadful were the conditions of life to-day that it behoved every man to be a rebel against them, and he called upon his hearers to become active opponents against the existing order.

P. KROPOTKINE, after having reminded us of the facts which led to the murder of our Chicago comrades, and their heroic behaviour for eighteen months during the trial, went on to say that now, every one of the nine years elapsed has been a confirmation of the views of our Chicago comrades. The conflict between labour and capital grew more and more acute; and very many of the workers of America have already understood who were their real friends on the 1st of May, 1896. A beautiful monument has been erected over the graves of these heroes, and every year thousands of workers piously visit it. Public opinion had induced Governor Altgeld to release the two Chicago Anarchists who were still alive in hard labour, and he did it in a manly way, throwing the crime in the faces of the judges and the accusers. And every year in the history of the American Labour Movement has confirmed the views of our brothers. Every strike became a labour war. Workers were massacred during each strike, and the Pinkerton brigands became so odious that the people of Homestead hunted them down to a barge, set fire to it, and rejoiced at seeing them drowned under the flare of the conflagration. Every year, the conflict between labour and money became more acute in the great republic, and one asks oneself if it is not there that the first great battle between manly labour and rotten capital will be fought. The last strikes had shown what a formidable power could be exhibited by labour association, especially those which are formed on the spot, for the purpose of a big strike. Nay, during the last great railway strike, it was seriously discussed whether it would not be advisable to call out all the 200,000 strikers, and to repair—an army of rebel workers—to one of the Western (Oregon for instance) where the nationalisation of land and railways would be proclaimed, and an immense commune covering the territory of a whole state would be started. Not merely a singly city as it was in Paris but a whole territory, with all its agricultural and industrial resources. And finally, at the last Presidential Election, have we not seen the American nation divided into two nations—the workers, the farmer, the poor on the one side, and the money-bags on the other, bitterly opposed to each other. So bitterly opposed that the inscription on the banners of the poor in the procession were even more demonstrative than what ever had been said or written by Parsons, Spies, Fischer, Engel and their comrades. And the rich all over the world have understood the hint. "McKinley elected, an end will now be made to all silverism, Altgeldism and Anarchist plots"—such was the first cablegram received here to announce the results of the election. Referring then to the struggles which were going on in France, Italy and Spain, and the prosecutions in these countries, Kropotkin mentioned the necessity for the workers of well knowing themselves what they are going to do if they become masters of the land and capital. Spies, Parsons, Lingg, Fischer and Engels, he concluded, felt that necessity very keenly. They were never tired of discussing that great question with the workers. They never said to them: "let the elect ones see to it"; they were doubly grand because they were men of action and men of thought.

EDWARD CARPENTER referred feelingly to the Walsall Anarchists, in whom he was much interested. He pointed out that the establishment of Collectivism might also lead to the establishment of a system of bureaucracy and officialism. Hence it was necessary to keep preaching the gospel of freedom. The Chicago men had not given their lives in vain. He thanked them for the example they had set.

If would be impossible to sum up the admirable, poetical and thoughtful speech of LOUISE MICHEL; small jottings only can be given. After referring to the loss of our Chicago brothers, she said there was nevertheless a sure token to show that the privileged classes will not very long have their own way. When they lately spent millions to protect to Tzar at Paris, they felt themselves that they were in the wrong. Those who were not criminals need not such a strong guard. They might protect themselves by soldiers, but nothing would prevent their own conscience telling against them. The potentates of Europe are now cursing the Sultan; but were not they themselves ready to do the same—to massacre their subjects? How long this would last, no one could tell; but the more crimes they accumulated the sooner would come the day of reckoning. Those who have died on the scaffold have accelerated the coming of that day. The more the rulers strike, the more they awaken popular conscience. Those ideas only conquer the world which have been proclaimed in the Roman circus, on the scaffold. How will that day come we know not. It may be a general strike, or a general uprising which will bring it about. No matter what! But their only, every human being will find the way for his truly humane development.

HERBERT STOCKTON, spoke next, and among other things said, there had been men of science, men of fame and workmen speaking during the evening but he was going to speak on behalf of the nobodies, for it was the so-called nobodies that the men of Chicago died.

H. ALSFORD, W. BANHAM, C. T. QUINN, and ANDREW HALL (generally known as "Navy Hall") followed in good style until 11 p.m., the hour of closing arrived.

*Canning Town.*—We held a Chicago Martyrs' Commemoration meeting on Monday, November 9. Speakers were W. Banham, John Turner, J. Perry, and Sam Mainwaring. Collection 3/7, and fair sale of Speeches.—W. HACKMANS

*Spitalfields.*—A well-attended commemoration meeting was held by the "Workers' Friend" Group, on Saturday, November 14, at Christchurch Hall. Speakers were Comrades Leggatt, Caplan, Roeker, Jäger, and others. Good collection and fair sale of literature.—W.

IN THE PROVINCES.

*Aberdeen Anarchist Group.*—We held a very successful meeting in commemoration of the judicial murder of our Chicago comrades. Speakers: C. Archibald, H. H. Duncan, Geo. Fraser, E. Shepherd, and others.—H. H. D.

*Glasgow.*—Our Chicago Commemoration Meeting was held on Sunday, Nov. 15th, in the Labor Hall, Main Street. It took the form of a social evening with speeches, songs, etc. The attendance was very large, considering there was no public notice given of the event. An enjoyable evening was spent. Speeches were delivered by Comrades Levinson, Neil, Vinestock, Turley, and others.—WM. DUFF.

*Leeds.*—A few of the old Socialist League members in Leeds held a social gathering in Liberty Hall on November 11, and with song and speech remembered our comrades of Chicago. Tom Paylor gave a splendid little speech that will be remembered by those present.—MACQUEEN.

*Norwich.*—On Sunday, November 15, we had Comrade Kitz here, who spoke to a fair-sized audience in the Market Place, and he kept them amused and interested for an hour. Questions from a Social Democrat were satisfactorily answered. In the evening, we were allowed the free use of the I.L.P. Lecture Room, wherein Kitz dealt with the Chicago Martyrs and why they were executed, concluding with an attack on Social Democracy, which fired up a Social Democrat—who denied that they were bossed by Hyndman or by the Central Council of the S.D.F.; but he also remarked that, although he did not think we were in league with the capitalists, he certainly was of opinion that we were as much the enemies of Socialism as the capitalists themselves—a position that was made to look rather ridiculous by Comrades Moore and Houghton, who took part in the discussion.—A. B.

*Liverpool.*—*Ca ira!* (still it moves.) For some time past, in spite of the inclemency of the weather, our well-tried speakers and fighters for the cause, Despres, Kavanagh, and others, have held very successful meetings; and, in order to bring our summer campaign to a close, we decided to commemorate the murder of our comrades of Chicago. On Saturday, November 14, a meeting was held in the open air, at which Comrade Perry spoke, but unfortunately a heavy shower came on, and the meeting dispersed. On Sunday, two meetings were held, in the Oddfellows' Hall, at 2 and at 7 o'clock. All thanks are certainly due to the members of the S.D.F. for the way in which they turned up to support us, thus showing a far better spirit than was exhibited at the International Congress. Comrade Jannings of the S.D.F. took the chair at both meetings; and he certainly showed great tact and ability by the manner in which he conducted the meetings. Comrade Millnor, in his usual brilliant and versatile fashion, proved conclusively the corruption and brutality of the civic authorities of Chicago. Comrade Barton gave a graphic account of the state of Chicago, and all the incidents connected with the trial. Comrade Perry followed, and in an excellent speech criticised the evidence of various witnesses, and concluded by a peroration that did credit to him. In the evening, the "government above," like the government below, showed its opposition to the Anarchists, but a fairly good audience attended. Comrade Kavanagh was the opening speaker, and briefly pointed out a few incidents in connection with the case. Comrade Barton followed, and in his speech marked out the lesson that could be drawn from the case, and how they bore upon the social problem, and in a very humorous style pointed out the fallacy of trying to capture that machine, born of force and fraud, to further the end of the people. Comrade Perry next addressed the meeting, and in beautiful language pointed out the evolution of ideas and institutions, showing that institutions were but the reflection of prevalent ideas, and drew a parallel between ancient Athens and modern American Republic; he showed how our five comrades were brutally murdered in order to satisfy the rage of the bourgeoisie, who felt that their interests were at stake, and that if our comrades could but succeed their reign of terror by which they existed would be ended for ever. Comrade Elstein of Leeds spoke at both meetings in Yiddish, and also did some good propaganda amongst the trade unions. A Yiddish-speaking Anarchist Group has been started by his exertions.—MAGGIE SINNETT.

ANARCHISM: ITS PHILOSOPHY AND IDEAL.

By PETER KROPOTKIN.

(Continued.)

In fact, it suffices to recall for a moment the present terrible waste, to conceive what a civilised society can produce with but a small quantity of labor if all share in it, and what grand works might be undertaken that are out of the question to-day. Unfortunately, the metaphysics called political economy has never troubled about that which should have been its essence—economy of labor.

There is no longer any doubt as regards the possibility of wealth in a Communist society, armed with our present machinery and tools. Doubts only arise when the question at issue is, whether a society can exist in which man's actions are not subject to State control; whether, to reach well-being, it is not necessary for European communities to sacrifice the little personal liberty they have reconquered at the cost of so many sacrifices during this century? A section of Socialists believe that it is impossible to attain such a result without sacrificing personal liberty on the altar of the State. Another section, to which we belong, believes, on the contrary, that it is only by the abolition of the State, by the conquest of perfect liberty by the individual, by free agreement, association, and absolute free federation that we can reach Communism—the possession in common of our social inheritance, and the production in common of all riches.

That is the question outweighing all others at present, and that Socialism must solve, on pain of seeing all its efforts endangered and all its ulterior development paralysed.



Let us, therefore, analyse it with all the attention it deserves.

If every Socialist will carry his thoughts back to an earlier date, he will no doubt remember the host of prejudices aroused in him when, for the first time, he came to the thought that abolishing the capitalist system and private appropriation of land and capital had become an historical necessity.

The same feelings are to-day produced in the man who for the first time hears that the abolition of the State, its laws, its entire system of management, governmentality and centralisation, also becomes an historical necessity: that the abolition of the one without the abolition of the other is materially impossible. Our whole education—made, be it noted, by Church and State, in the interests of both—revolts at this conception.

Is it less true for that? And shall we allow our belief in the State to survive the host of prejudices we have already sacrificed for our emancipation?

It is not my intention to criticise to-night the State, that has been done and redone so often, and I am obliged to put off to another lecture the analysis of the historical part played by the State. A few general remarks will suffice.

To begin with, if man, since his origin, has always lived in societies, the State is but one of the forms of social life, quite recent as far as regards European societies. Men lived thousands of years before the first States were constituted; Greece and Rome existed for centuries before the Macedonian and Roman Empires were built up, and for us modern Europeans the centralised States date but from the sixteenth century. It is only then, after the defeat of the free mediæval Communes had been completed that the mutual insurance company between military, judicial, landlord, and capitalist authority which we call "State," could be fully established.

It was only in the sixteenth century that a mortal blow was dealt to ideas of local independence, to free union and organisation, to federation of all degrees among sovereign groups, possessing all functions now seized upon by the State. It was only then that an alliance between Church and the nascent power of Royalty put an end to this organisation, based on the principle of federation, which had existed from the ninth to the fifteenth century, and which had produced in Europe the great period of free cities of the middle ages, whose character has been so well understood in France by Sismondi and Augustin Thierry—two historians unfortunately too little read now-a-days.

We know well the means by which this association of lord, priest, merchant, judge, soldier, and king founded its domination. It was by the annihilation of all free unions: of village communities, guilds, trades unions, fraternities, and mediæval cities. It was by confiscating the land of the communes and the riches of the guilds; it was by the absolute and ferocious prohibition of all kinds of free agreement between men; it was by massacre, the wheel, the gibbet, the sword, and the fire that Church and State established their domination, and that they succeeded henceforth to reign over an incoherent agglomeration of 'subjects' who had no direct union more among themselves.

It is now hardly thirty of forty years ago that we began to reconquer, by struggle, by revolt, the first steps of the right of association, that was freely practised by the artisans and the tillers of the soil through the whole of the middle ages.

And, already now, Europe is covered by thousands of voluntary associations for study, teaching, for industry, commerce, science, art, literature, exploitation, resistance to exploitation, amusement, serious work, gratification and self-denial, for all that makes up the life of an active and thinking being. We see these societies rising in all nooks and corners of all domains: political, economic, artistic, intellectual. Some are as shortlived as roses, some hold their own since several decades, and all strive—while maintaining the independence of each group, circle, branch, or section—to federate, to unite, across frontiers as well as among each nation; to cover all the life of civilised men with a net, meshes of which are intersected and interwoven. Their number can already be reckoned by tens of thousands, they comprise millions of adherents—although less than fifty years have elapsed since Church and State began to tolerate a few of them—very few, indeed.

These societies already begin to encroach everywhere on the functions of the State, and strive to substitute free action of volunteers for that of a centralised State. In England we see arise insurance companies against theft; societies for coast defence, volunteer societies for land defence, which the State endeavors to get under its thumb, thereby making them instruments of domination, although their original aim was to do without the State. Were it not for Church and State, free societies would have already conquered the whole of the immense domain of education. And, in spite of all difficulties, they begin to invade this domain as well, and make their influence already felt.

And when we mark the progress that is accomplished in that direction, in spite of and against the State, which tries by all means to maintain its supremacy of recent origin; when we see how voluntary societies invade everything and are only impeded in their development by the State, we are forced to recognise a powerful tendency, a latent force in modern society. And we ask ourselves this question: If, five, ten, or twenty years hence—it matters little—the workers succeed by revolt in destroying the said mutual insurance society of landlords, bankers, priests, judges, and soldiers; if the people become masters of their destiny for a few months, and lay hands on the riches they have created, and which belong to them by right—will they really begin to reconstitute that blood-sucker, the State? Or will they not rather try to organise from the simple to the complex, according to mutual agreement

and to the infinitely varied, ever-changing needs of each locality, in order to secure the possession of those riches for themselves, to mutually guarantee one another's life, and to produce what will be found necessary for life?

Will they follow the dominant tendency of the century, or will they march contrary to this tendency and strive to reconstitute demolished authority?

Educated men—"civilised," as Fourier used to say with disdain—tremble at the idea that society might some day be without judges, police, or gaolers.

But, frankly, do you need them as much as you have been told in musty books? Books written, be it noted, by scientists who generally know well what has been written before them, but, for the most part, absolutely ignore the people and their every-day life.

If we can wander, without fear, not only in the streets of Paris, which bristle with police, but especially in rustic walks where you rarely meet passers by, is it to the police that we owe this security? or rather to the absence of people who care to rob or murder us? I am evidently not speaking of the one who carries millions about him. That one—a recent trial tells us—is soon robbed, by preference in places where there are as many policemen as lamp-posts. No, I speak of the man who fears for his life and not for his purse filled with ill-gotten sovereigns. Are his fears real?

Besides, has not experience demonstrated quite recently that Jack the Ripper performed his exploits under the eye of the London police—a most active force—and that he only left off killing when the population of Whitechapel itself began to give chase to him?

And in our every-day relations with our fellow-citizens, do you think that it is really judges, gaolers, and police that hinder anti-social acts from multiplying? The judge, ever ferocious, because he is a maniac of law, the accuser, the informer, the police spy, all those interlopers that live from hand to mouth around the Law Courts, do they not scatter demoralisation far and wide into society? Read the trials, glance behind the scenes, push your analysis further than the exterior facade of law courts, and you will come out sickened.

Have not prisons—which kill all will and force of character in man, which enclose within their walls more vices than are met with on any other spot of the globe—always been universities of crime? Is not the court of a tribunal a school of ferocity? And so on.

When we ask for the abolition of the State and its organs we are always told that we dream of a society composed of men better than they are in reality. But no; a thousand times, no. All we ask is that men should not be made worse than they are, by such institutions!

Once a German jurist of great renown, Ihering, wanted to sum up the scientific work of his life and write a treatise, in which he proposed analysing the factors that preserve social life in society. "Purpose in Law" (*Der Zweck im Rechte*), such is the title of that book, which enjoys a well-deserved reputation.

He made an elaborate plan of this treatise, and, with much erudition, discussed both coercive factors which are used to maintain society: wagedom and the different forms of coercion which are sanctioned by law. At the end of his work he reserved two paragraphs only to mention the two non-coercive factors—the feeling of duty and the feeling of mutual sympathy—to which he attached little importance, as might be expected from a writer in law.

But what happened? As he went on analysing the coercive factors he realised their insufficiency. He consecrated a whole volume to their analysis, and the result was to lessen their importance! When he began the last two paragraphs, when he began to reflect upon the non-coercive factors of society, he perceived, on the contrary, their immense, outweighing importance; and, instead of two paragraphs, he found himself obliged to write a second volume, twice as large as the first, on these two factors: voluntary restraint and mutual help; and yet, he analysed but an infinitesimal part of these latter—those which result from personal sympathy—and hardly touched free agreement, which results from social institutions.

Well, then, leave off repeating the formulæ which you have learned at school; meditate on this subject; and the same thing that happened to Ihering will happen to you: you will recognise the infinitesimal importance of coercion, as compared to the voluntary assent, in society.

On the other hand, if by following the very old advice given by Bentham you begin to think of the fatal consequences—direct, and especially indirect—of legal coercion, then, like Tolstoy, like us, you will begin to hate the use of coercion, and you will begin to say that society possesses a thousand other means for preventing anti-social acts. If it neglects these means to-day, it is because, being educated by Church and State, our cowardice and apathy of spirit hinder us seeing clearly on this point. When a child has committed a fault, it is so easy to punish it: that puts an end to all discussions! It is so easy to hang a man—especially when there is an executioner who is paid so much for each execution—and it dispenses us from thinking of the cause of crimes.

It is often said that Anarchists live in a world of dreams to come, and do not see the things which happen to-day. We do see them only too well, and in their true colours, and that is what makes us carry the hatchet into that forest of prejudices that beset us.

Far from living in a world of visions and imagining men better than they are, we see them as they are, and that is why we affirm that the best of men is made essentially bad by the exercise of authority; and that the theory of the "balancing of powers" and "control of authorities" is a hypocritical formula, invented by those who have seized



power, to make the "sovereign people," whom they despise, believe that the people themselves are governing. It is because we know men that we say to those who imagine that men would devour one another without those governors: "You reason like the king, who, being sent across the frontier, called out: 'What will become of my poor subjects without me!'"

(To be continued.)

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

The International Congress has almost passed into oblivion; even of the Social Democrats the most think the less said about it the better. Only Mr. Bebel, who, during the Congress, opposed an absolute and stolid silence to all appeals to his sense of shame and honor to explain the doubtful meaning of the Zurich rule, recently found his tongue again, and at the Gotha Congress of the German Social Democratic Party once more heaped insults and excommunications upon the unhappy Anarchists. Yet even there, in the most select conclave of orthodox Marxists, a delegate from Leipzig (Greuz) uttered a protest, however feeble, against this habit of treating Anarchists as enemies of the working class movement—the first protest of the kind ever uttered within this party, so far as I am aware.

It was in France, only, that the discussion of questions resulting from the Congress was seriously taken up—by the French anti-parliamentarian groups. The General Strike was the prominent subject of the Congress of the *Bourses du Travail* (Trades Councils' Congress) held at Tours, and of the Allemanist (anti-parliamentarian Socialist) Congress of Paris.

Of the Anarchist movement itself there is little to tell; for, with the exception of direct acts and meetings and publications, the steady propaganda day by day leaves little to be recorded; persecutions never cease here and there; some time ago rumours of the discovery of ghastly plots at Barcelona were set afloat and many arrests made, but since that time we hear no more about it. Quite recently a number of comrades at Copenhagen were arrested, and the brisk propaganda carried on since this spring by *Proletaren* was stopped. The way such rumours are spread and arrests brought about was never better illustrated as arising out of the mercenary and blackmailing greed of the police for money, than by the famous "International-Nihilist-Anarchist-Fenian" plot of the English police, which, in spite of their self-advertising genius, collapsed so conspicuously.

Paolo Lega, who in 1894 fired at Crispi, died in the prison of San Bartolomeo (Sardinia). Crispi, at whose bidding thousands of men and women were imprisoned for years in Italy and Sicily, and thousands of stupid soldiers led to be butchered in Africa, is more and more revealed as the very model of civic virtues. After being convicted as a bank thief, it turns out that his son lived upon a woman, stole her jewels, and departed to America (where, in Brazil, he is said to have repeated the performance), whilst his father, the almighty minister, turned the suspicion upon innocent persons. At the same time, Bismark stands convicted of betraying Austria, his reputed ally, to Russia (witness his own recent revelations). The private and public "morality" of the upholders of law and order stand on the same level: brutal force and low treason are their real means of action, concealed from the public by a thick veil of patriotic slang.

In the face of all this, it is refreshing to be able to speak of at least two events of a progressive character: the Armenian attack upon the Ottoman Bank, and the Bohemian Miners' Strike. Both were acts of collective revolt by collective initiative, which shows that the effect of the acts of purely individual initiative was not lost.

An Armenian comrade told us the following concerning the progress of freedom in the Armenian Revolutionary Party: Eight years ago the *Hentchak* (The Bell) party alone existed, advocating the utmost centralization and the formation of a National State. Four or five years ago, however, the "Armenian Revolutionary Federation" was formed (publishing *Drochak*, "The Banner"), which demands the economic and political emancipation of all nationalities of these parts of Asia and their free federation; it is organized upon the basis of autonomous groups and (as I learn from the report distributed at the London Congress) it acts by fighting governmental despotism by the decentralised use of force in all its forms: the bands of Kukulian, the execution of spies, etc.; besides, it carries on Socialist propaganda which, though not Anarchist, seems to be open minded and unbiassed; for their first pamphlet, published in 1893, was a translation of Kropotkin's *Spirit of Revolt*.

Two or three years since, a Communist Anarchist propaganda began which led to the publication of translations of our best pamphlets (a similar selection as that contained in "Freedom Pamphlets") and of a journal, *Hamiuk* (The Commune) in 1894. "An Appeal to Socialists" was also published this summer.

We see here the revival of the energy, enthusiasm and devotion which bore up the old Nihilist movement, allied with the results of the experience of the failure of that movement. The Nihilist movement in its origin was almost Anarchist, and unfortunately, by and-by got spoiled by the admission of politicians, authoritarians and reformers, who brought about its present situation—whilst the Armenian movement, beginning under similar auspices, is developing itself in the right direction of freedom and autonomy.

Under these circumstances the daring attempt at the Ottoman Bank was made. Turkish society—which is as bourgeois as that of every other State—was attacked in its heart—the financial centre—and for a moment the words of the manifesto: "Who knows whether the dawn of the Social Revolution shall not arise from the Orient, hence to set fire to the whole world," seemed near to be fulfilled. When the Turkish Government replied by arming a mob of scoundrels to murder all Armenians, even these horrors will bear the fruit of opening our eyes as to what governments resort to in such situations; it is wholesale murder in Turkey, as in the streets of Paris after the Commune. We cannot complain of not being forewarned; those who stand aside from a revolution have only the choice of being the vilest murderers or to be massacred themselves.

Early in October about 6,000 workers of the north-western Bohemian coal mines suddenly struck work. In those parts Anarchist and the Independent Socialist agitation had been carried on, and the General Strike idea was very popular. The strike, however, originated with the miners themselves, who from the beginning did not insist upon these or those so-called practical demands, but declared their action the beginning of a general (miners) strike before all. Never was there a strike more bitterly fought by

mine-owners, the Government and Social-Democrats as well. The Government sent down such large numbers of soldiers, that for every unarmed miner there was probably one soldier ready to murder him. All meetings of the miners who tried to meet, even in the midst of forests, were proclaimed, and many arrests made. The local Social-Democratic paper of "a number of independent block-heads" who originated this strike,—"the craziest idea ever entertained"—and the chief paper, the daily *Arbeiter Zeitung*, of Vienna, almost boycotted the strike for a time; the Trade Union Committee of Vienna refused to support it as it had not been consulted about its opportuneness beforehand, etc. A more complete abandonment of a working-class movement by the working-classes (at the bidding of their leaders) was never heard of. After about ten days the strike ceased.

These events are instructive under various aspects. They show how governments are afraid of a general strike. They can go on very well with ordinary strikes in which all sorts of busybodies so much like to interfere as mediators, etc.; if this is not efficient a little massacre is provoked, and sooner or later all ends with the usual compromise. But in face of an active, aggressive general strike they feel themselves powerless, and their only resort is, as with the Sultan, downright murder—a soldier is placed in front of every striker, and an unsupported strike is crushed in this way. But if the strike were spreading, the soldiers would soon give out. The other lesson is the demonstration of to what extent of treachery the Social-Democratic party descends to when a purely economic action is taking place outside of their ranks. Many think that in spite of theoretical differences economic solidarity is a matter of common and neutral ground between all sections of the labour movement. These facts tend to disprove this assumption.\*

## THE PROPAGANDA.

### REPORTS.

#### LONDON.

*Deptford.*—Since our last report, things here have been livelier than ever. Searih, the "Christian Evidence" lecturer, having, with the aid of his mob of roughs, succeeded in frightening the Secularists off the Broadway, has now turned his attention to us—thinking to accomplish a similar result. But he has found out his mistake. Our meetings have been kept up regularly, with the exception of a few Sundays. Five meetings in succession have been broken up by the Christian roughs. Our speakers have been Alsford, Kitz, Young, Perry, and Carter. We have started a new outdoor station at East Greenwich, outside the "Ship and Billet." Several successful meetings have been held here, addressed by S. Carter, R. Carter, and Belsey, the latter showing signs of becoming a promising speaker. We have tried hard to get a hall for indoor lectures, but find ourselves boycotted on every hand. We shall therefore continue the propaganda, as far as possible, in the open.—W. H.

*Canning Town.*—The propaganda here for the past month has been all that could be desired, taking into consideration the very cold weather we have had. On Nov. 1st, J. Perry spoke for us, when we collected 3s. 3d. and sold 5s.-worth of literature. In the evening, Comrades Peddie and Leggett held a meeting in the Stratford Grove, where 3s. 4d.-worth of literature was sold. On Nov. 2nd, the old electioneering dodge took place for Town Councillor(d)ship, the result being: Godbold (I.L.P.) 818 votes, Hayday (S.D.F.) 716. Five years ago, before the Anarchists seceded from the local branch of the S.D.F., Will Thorne (S.D.F.) polled 1,700 votes; two years ago, he only polled 802; and now the Social Democrat Hayday can only poll 716. What a falling off was there! Messrs. Burrows and Hyndman spoke at Mansfield House in support of Hayday as a Social Democratic candidate, but he was, however, returned as a trade unionist, having had the support of the West Ham Trades Council and the Gas Workers' Union, of which he is a member. As a matter of fact, the Social Democratic vote is not strong enough to return a Social Democratic candidate, their branch membership only numbering 30, with one delegate on the General Council of the S.D.F. One named Howard, secretary of the party who introduced Keir Hardie to the district, polled 529, making a total poll of Hardie's supporters 1347—not a bright look out for Hardie, should he again contest this constituency. The returns are a small part of the 14,000 electors in the district. The S.D.F. candidate Bissel was defeated; he has made three attempts, and fail'd each time. In North West Ham, where we hold weekly meetings, Morton (S.D.F.) polled 175 votes. In the race for power Socialism goes under, the perpetuation of town life is the essential part that must be played by those socialists who wish to get the reins of government into their hands. But their energies would certainly be much better spent in trying rather to break down centralised power, which is the cause of jerry-built houses, bad sanitation, and competition for employment, about which they rave so much.—On Nov. 8th, E. Young spoke. Nov. 15th, we had H. Stockton down. Collection, 2s.; literature sold, 2s. 10d. Taking a review of the past month, things look well here for Anarchism.—W. HACKMAN.

*Hoxton.*—Notwithstanding the inclement weather we still continue the meetings outside the Church. The attendance is good and the sale of literature and collections satisfactory. Both the S.D.F. and I.L.P. have tried to work this station, but without success; in fact the S.D.F. has entirely disappeared and left not a trace behind them. The Hoxton folk do not take kindly to political dodgery. The group here, in conjunction with the other London groups is arranging a benefit concert for Comrade Percy, who has just left the hospital, and consequently is in very low water. The concert will take place at Communist Club, 53, Charlotte Street, W., on Friday, December 18th. All are invited.—E. Y.

*Somers Town.*—Owing to the severe weather the meetings at the corner of Ossulston Street have been dropped this last week or two, much to the gratification of the local police, who generally turn up six or seven strong under the superintendence of an Inspector. A few weeks ago the Inspector interfered and told us we must move further back, as we were obstructing the Euston Road. This is the only interference we have had. The local Gospel-punchers, who hail from a Presbyterian hell-fire-and-damnation depot run by a gentleman bearing the euphonistic appellation of Zebenhia Woffendale, are unable to get an audience whilst our meetings are on, cornet and fiddle notwithstanding.—E. Y.

*Edmonton.*—On Sunday the 22nd inst., comrade Edwards lectured at the Theatre Royal upon "Our Ideal and how to obtain it." The lecturer stated that the workers must be taught to think, to gain a knowledge of their situation, and also to know that it is they who will have to do the producing and distributing in the future order of society, and that if they have not the knowledge and ability to do this, no Executive Council or Board of Administration can make up the deficiency. Some strong opposition was provoked by his assertion that the change could be made by a national strike when the workers were educated up to that point. One opponent said that the capitalist classes of the world would combine against us; another, that the army would shoot us down. In conclusion, our comrade pointed out that our movement was an international one; and that, when the ball was set rolling, the capitalists would find their hands very full indeed. And that, by the time the workers were sufficiently advanced to proclaim the Commune in this way, it would be



impossible for our masters to control the military any longer, or use them against the people.—E. W.

#### PROVINCES.

**Norwich.**—We are still alive here. A few weeks we invited Comrade Perry to the town, and he addressed two very good meetings. In the afternoon he spoke on "Anarchist-Communism versus Social-Democracy," in the evening upon "Trades-Unionism and Anarchism." He received opposition at each meeting from local Social-Democrats. It seemed to have raised the ire of these individuals, not only at the clever way in which he dealt with the subject, but also in the way it was received by the audience, the majority endorsing our comrades view. Their opposition was of the most feeble kind, using the ordinary objections to Anarchism that the ordinary opponent would use against Social-Democracy. "We should all have to be argels before Anarchism could be in vogue," was one. One speaker, a typical State-Socialist sought sympathy from the audience by harping on violence, especially on the bomb outrages in Barcelona; but he miserably failed. So ended a successful day's propaganda. We next invited J. C. Kenworthy down to lecture on October 12th. Comrade Perry came again at our invitation on Sunday, October 11th, a miserably cold day. He spoke in the Market Place on "Anarchism versus Violence" to a good audience, the S.D.F. had their political organiser, Chatterton, speaking. Now this political organiser is completely ignorant of the principles of Anarchism. He tried to deal with it one night in the city, and his objection to it was "that under Anarchist-Communism people would be so bad that whilst travelling in a railway carriage, the first two or three persons who entered would stretch their legs along the seats and thus prevent others from occupying sitting room." The moral of course is that brute force is necessary to regulate man's desire for ease and happiness in society. I suppose he would have the effrontery to say that he does not believe in the principle of compulsion. He raised other objections equally as absurd. Our meeting in the Market Place numbered about 400 persons, that of the S.D.F. about 40, which fact very much irritated our friends, who came direct from their meeting and plied Perry with a lot more absurd questions that had no bearing on the subject spoken of. This time the audience could see the move and therefore would not stand them, so they left. How much better it would have been if they had chosen Chatterton to have offered opposition on their behalf, seeing he is so well able to deal with the subject, (?) but he carefully avoided our comrade. Sunday evening being too cold for out-door meetings, and having no hall to lecture in, we did the next best thing and had a jolly convivial at one of the comrade's homes. The following evening Kenworthy lectured at the Victoria Hall, about 300 people thinking Anarchism worth listening to. There would have been quite double the number if the weather had not been so wretched. The lecture was both instructive and interesting, some liking him so well that he has received an invitation from some independent friends to lecture again in this city. After the lecture we received an invitation to the I.L.P. Club where we had a social hour—I.L.P.'ers and Anarchists together. The spirit of the I.L.P. is far different to that of the S.D.F., and we are on quite friendly terms with them; several of their members being entirely with us in our view of the future society. Although we were a good bit out of pocket over the Kenworthy lecture the comrades were not in the least bit discouraged. We are at considerable disadvantage here, being denied the use of public schools for meetings, although both I.L.P. and S.D.F. can have the use of them, also sad to state we have no local speaker of our own. In spite of all these drawbacks we intend to let them know we are alive in this city, and we hope next year to do much work than we have done this. We want it possible to commence the season with a visit from Kropotkin, as there is a great wish on the part of comrades and friends to hear him again. One thing more, we are always sure when we have speakers of having good meetings, even if there is another Socialist meeting going on at the same time, we are sure of getting the larger meeting, for the simple reason that we have in our ranks a good number of the faces that belonged to the old Socialist League, who were the ones that did the work in past days that has caused Socialism to be so well received here. The people recognise this and come to our meetings where they hear pure and unadulterated Socialism taught.—A. B.

**Glasgow.**—The comrades here were very sorry to hear of the death of William Morris. It is a loss we all feel. Some years ago (1892) we lost another comrade—Walt Whitman; he sang:

"Come, I will make the continent indissoluble,  
I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon,  
I will make divine magnetic lands,  
With the love of comrades  
With the life-long love of comrades."

These two men were our comrades. I say no more.

The usual out-door meetings are being held every Sunday, weather permitting). Comrade Wess paid us a visit, and put in a lot of useful work which is already bearing fruit. On October 4th we held a large meeting on Glasgow Green; Speakers: Wess, McCabe, Levenson. Splendid speeches, no opposition, large sale of literature. Every Sunday we have this repeated, and again those of the comrades who are not public speakers are devoting their attention to conversational propaganda, and in this line their efforts have been very successful. We are also visiting some of the country places around Glasgow, and the prospects in these places is very encouraging indeed; we always have large meetings, seldom any opposition, good sale of literature, and I think if we just put all our energy into the work and keep pegging away with the speaking and spreading of literature, our ideas will soon take root, and then for the glorious harvest—Universal Happiness! There is only one discordant note, and that is we are handicapped for want of speakers. Come now! rally! round comrades! Com. Levenson lectures for the Voluntary Party on November 22, subject: "Communism". I cannot let this opportunity pass without mentioning the amount done for the Cause by our Comrade Levenson. There is not one night in the whole week that is his own. Speaking for his own Trade Union one night, speaking for the Tailors Union another night, attending Trade Council another, speaking for the Brushmakers Union another, and so on, always in harness. Will no one come to give him a rest. This is our report, and that is the way the good work goes on for Freedom; as Comrade Carpenter writes: "It shall be then. The way is long, but the centuries are long. Faint not. Does my voice sound distant? Faint not. Even now for a moment round your neck, advancing, I stretch my arms; to my lips I draw you; I press upon your lips the seal of a covenant that cannot be forgotten."—Wm. DUFF.

**Yorkshire.**—We have again little to report, but next month we shall be to an extent organised, and are hoping for some good work. Padway lectured at the North-West Ward Club on the 1st, and lectures again on November 22, at the Leeds Labour Church. Fox is at Rothwell on December 20th, on "Passive Resistance," and MacQueen is at Barrow some date in December. Apropos of our lecturing at I.L.P. branches, an interesting incident occurred recently. On the 16th MacQueen was to have lectured in Batley; all was seemingly well until the subject was known and we straightway received a post-card saying, "Don't want MacQueen; we don't like Anarchist principles here." All the I.L.P. branches are not broad-minded, and as in this case, before they know Anarchist teachings, "don't like them." "Bombism" is still confused with Anarchism; but we live in hopes. On November 28th an open Anarchist Conference will take place at the Leeds Labour Church, and from the number of promised adherents we are hoping for a strong group. The lecture scheme promoted by the Leeds Educational League, composed of I.L.P.'ers and Anarchists is at last coming to a head. Hubert Bland is to lead off, and Carpenter

comes soon. We believe that Kropotkin has partly promised for the New Year. If his eye happens to light on this will he listen to an appeal from the comrades here that he will come. The general Socialist movement here is in just that state of transition that if he was to come he would do a bit of good. It is a long, long while since he was here. Bidlay didn't get in the Council; in fact he was "Bad(a)y" beaten. He is going to debate the question of "Can an Anarchist become a Councillor," with MacQueen, shortly. Comrades ought not to forget that Yorkshire and Lancashire are perhaps the most important place in England for our propaganda. We want as much help as we can get. Banham is coming here for a month in the New Year, can't some other comrades come here too? Don't all speak at once. We also want notions about propaganda. Can any comrades who have worked in the Trade Union or Co-operative movements give us a few hints; and we should also like to hear about some of the colonisation schemes that are in the air. We promise to pull them well to pieces to extract all the good for our own use. Please don't all wait for one another to speak; exercise a little initiative and communicate with us at 46 Banstead Terrace, Roundhay Road Leeds.—MACQUEEN

**Edinburgh.**—After a very decent summer's propaganda we have got our Sunday night meetings in the Moulders Hall fairly started; the only question with us now is, can we get speakers enough to keep them going; we opened on Oct. 4th with a paper from Comrade Robertson criticising W. D. Macgregor's (an Edinburgh man), "Reply to 'Merrie England,'" under the expectation that Mr. Macgregor would turn up and give us a good discussion. He did not take the "bait" however, and as there was seemingly no other believer in monopoly present, the discussion fell somewhat flat. Oct. 11th, comrade Hall lectured on "Anarchist Communism v. Social Democracy." He pointed out, in his usual robust style, where the evils of granting power to any class of men would come in, and the actual necessity of the individual retaining his individuality, if we are to hold even the standard of life we now hold;—no great discussion. Oct. 18th comrade Doris gave his reasons for being an "Anarchist and Atheist" to a large audience. His remarks were very attractive all through, and at times even witty, more especially on the atheistic side, a subject with which our comrade is quite at home. Still lack of discussion. Oct. 25th Hall again took the platform and lectured on "Religion the chief cause of atrocities." He necessarily turned up many old sores which quite naturally caused a sprinkling of the "goody goody" to wince and sneer. When the lecturer finished, however, and questions and discussion were invited, the sneering had subsided. Nov. 1st comrade Guyou of Paris, (who is residing here at present) spoke on "Communism and Individualism." This lecture was chiefly meant for the "initiated." It was a most valuable lecture in its way. He pointed out the silliness of Individualists and Communists quarrelling over what neither have any business with; our real work being the abolition of monopoly, which when accomplished will settle all questions. The discussion was much brighter at this meeting. Nov. 8th P. McGovern of the Edinburgh Secular Union lectured for us on "Gods, Devils and Men." There was a large audience—no doubt the effects of this trinitarian title. The lecturer, who is a very eloquent speaker, and evidently well-read, gave a rousing exposition of the religious "fake" in all ages, finishing up with the modern "Sal-V," whom he severely ridiculed. There was any amount of questions and discussion. Nov. 15th comrade Muir of Glasgow lectured on "Mutual Aid among Animals." In describing the habits of bees, ants, beavers, etc., he showed how man, with all his intelligence, might adopt many of the same with advantage. The lecturer was full of valuable information and would have been more effective had the lecturer assumed a little more of the domineering style. Although not speakers, comrades McGregor, Godfrey, and Adams have helped greatly in making the meetings successful. Their forte is bill-posting, which they have developed into an art. There is scarcely one of the many lanes in the city you may go into without being invited to the Anarchist meeting. They are the salt of the group. Our literature is selling much the same as in past years, excepting FREEDOM which is going better since the beginning of these meetings.—G. R.

**Aberdeen.**—Although we have not been sending reports to Freedom of late, it is not to be assumed that we have "shuffled off this mortal coil." On the contrary, we have been actively engaged in propaganda. The various sphere's in which the members of the Group have been working would take more space to chronicle than your pages would allow. The following, however, is a record of work done immediately relating to the spread of Anarchism. During the summer month's attention was exclusively devoted to out-door propaganda; the meetings were large and enthusiastic; the speakers being G. Fraser, Eglan Shepherd and H. H. Duncan. Other members not possessed of "the gift o' the gab" rendered good service by singing, selling papers and pamphlets, etc., although the indefatigable A. Fraser is still chief in this valuable department of propaganda. During the summer we were visited by John Smith and W. K. Hall of Edinburgh, both comrades are old favorites in Aberdeen, but they were both successful in adding to their reputation. Our indoor propaganda commenced in the Oddfellows Large Hall on the first Sunday of October, and during the month the following lectures were delivered: October 4, "Anarchism and the Labor Movement," by H. H. Duncan; October 11, "The Anarchist Conception of Society," by E. Shepherd; October 18, "A Registry Office," by Chas. Archibald; on Sunday October 25 we had a very enjoyable concert, several concerted pieces were contributed by the Group Choir, Mr. John Harkiss gave a few recitations in a very able manner. The programme for November was supplied by the following: November 1, the "The Political Situation" by H. H. Duncan; November 8, The Chicago Martyrs Commemoration; November 15, "Government and Morality," by E. Shepherd; November 22 "Political Economy," C. Archibald; November 29, concert. In addition to the above we have conducted a very successful series of meetings on Wednesday evenings in Liberty Hall, the idea of these meetings being to "hear all sides," that we have succeeded in our endeavor can be seen from the following programme: October 7, "Mormonism," by T. J. Arbuthnot; October 14, "Humanitarianism," by H. H. Duncan; October 21, "Vegetarianism," by W. Balfour; October 28, a lecture by C. Archibald; November 4, "Anarchist Propaganda," by E. Shepherd; November 11, lecture by Miss Farquharson; November 18, "Anarchism: an adverse criticism," by W. Clark Mitchell; November 25, "Mental Philosophy," by Forbes Mackenzie; December 2, "Why I am a Social Democrat," by W. Smith; December 9, musical night. On the whole, we have reason to be satisfied with our propaganda. We are the only Labor organisation now holding regular indoor meetings in Aberdeen. Our friends of the I.L.P. and S.D.F. are at present engaged in a washing competition, the linen being very dirty indeed; nevertheless, they are providing "a source of innocent amusement" for the citizens. While they are actively engaged in fighting each other, we are arduously engaged in fighting the enemy—Monopoly.—H. H. D.

#### MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

of cash received during November.

To SALES OF "FREEDOM": German Group, 1s.; Liverpool Group, 1s.4d.; Caning Town Group, 8s.; Manchester Group, 6s.; Blagdon, 1s.; Gunderson, 1s.4d.; Wright, 5s.; Reeves, 3s.4d.; Ferdinand, 1s.6d.; Edinburgh Group, 4s.; Deptford Group, 4s.; at Holborn Town Hall, 9s.; MacQueen, 4s.; Hoxton Group, 4s.; Sparrow, 2s.; L. Turner, 1s.3d.; I. Rudash, 8s.; T. C., 3s.4d.; W. W., 5s.4d.; Miscellaneous sales, 6s.  
To "FREEDOM" SUBSCRIBERS: Hammond, 1s.6d.; Arnold, 1s.6d.; Moore, 1s.6d.; Fletcher, 1s.6d.; Johnson, 1s.6d.; E. Koeppl, 1s.6d.; W. Young, 1/6