

Freedom

C.I.R.A.

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LEGISLATION.

There has been some awakening of public interest of late over two important social problems, which are not new by any means, but which have forced themselves to the front by the mere *impasse* to which present social conditions have brought them. We refer first and foremost to the housing of the working classes, and secondly, to that still more complicated problem (complicated as things stand)—the care of the worker's life under present capitalistic conditions. The modern economist and politician are pleased to regard this latter as two distinct questions—compensation for loss of life or limb, and old age pensions for such as survive to 65 years.

Now here we have, without doubt, two of the most important problems a "practical" nation could possibly set itself to solve. It is no question of art, of beauty, of "sweetness and light," which Mathew Arnold insisted the community so much needed, it is a most prosaic matter-of-fact question which, put in all its naked barbarity, amounts to this: How shall we stable, feed and generally care for that indispensable animal—the worker? It is just one of those questions which if it were suggested should be dealt with on Anarchist-Communist principles would arouse the unbounded hilarity of the "practical man." Let us see, then, what this much-lauded individual has been doing and proposes yet to do regarding these important matters.

To begin with, of course he is for legislation. What he believes in, he will tell you, is to go to the wholesale shop at Westminster, buy up large quantities of legislative Acts for conferring "powers" on local bodies, and retail them out through the vestries and the County Council. We all know well enough how much the worker feels the benefit of this legislation when at last it filters down and down to the sphere of his domestic life. *It has become invisible.* We will not stop to enumerate here all the Acts that have been passed for his supposed benefit from the factory legislation, which was to protect his life, to the adulteration Acts, which were to protect his food, and over the graves of each of which legislative fiasco can be written the word "failure." It will be more to the point to call attention to the latest example of such instances, and this we shall find in the working of the Compensation Act. Let Mr. Chamberlain—practical man *par excellence*, and a legislative genius—set forth his own fair promises:—

"While he (Mr. Asquith) will deal with this subject incompletely, inefficiently, I propose to deal with it once for all and completely. I propose to say that every workman who is injured without fault of his own shall be entitled, as a matter of right, to reasonable compensation, to such solace in his misfortune as pecuniary assistance can give; and I propose not to make this a question of litigation, not to send him into the courts to get it, but to make it a matter of statute about which there can be no possible uncertainty."—Mr. Chamberlain, July 10th, 1895.

The *Daily News*, in a series of articles which appeared last month has so completely exposed the disastrous breakdown of this Act, that we cannot do better than quote the most striking statements.

"The Act has had a terrible effect upon the veterans of toil. Life has long gone hardly enough with the workman showing 'silver threads among the golden.' The Act has intensified the hardship a hundredfold. . . . I find that in Sheffield, Manchester, Oldham, and Newcastle, where I have made inquiries a number of old engineers have lost their work, practically for ever, as the result of the Act, although some of these men have ten to fifteen years of good service left in them. . . . This is the notice issued by the Barrow Hematite Steel Company:

"From this date forward please notice that no men are to be engaged who are known to have any defects, such as the loss of a limb, defective sight or hearing. Further, no men are to be engaged in any department who are older than 50 years of age. Any men already in the employ of the company in excess

of this age may be retained, but in case of their leaving they are not to be re-engaged."

Passing rapidly over the other evils brought about by the Act, such as the employment of boys in place of men, the exemption from its "benefits" of many dangerous callings and the usual amount of confusion over its "lawful" interpretation, let us conclude our quotation with the following, for which the *Daily News* must take the full responsibility:

"Mr. Jack Cade proposed to usher in his social Utopia by hanging all the lawyers. There was a good deal in his suggestion. Mr. Chamberlain contemplated nothing so blood-thirsty. He merely proposed to subject them to what Macaulay has called 'the most terrible form of destruction.' He was going to starve them out. In a word, his compensation Act was to get rid of all litigation in the matter of accidents. 'I propose not to make this a question of litigation, not to send him into the courts to get it, but to make it a matter of statute about which there can be no possible uncertainty.' What a fascinating prospect. But alas and alas, for good intentions! The Act has been a bundle of bones of contention. It has been productive of more litigation than any other measure within a like period from birth."

Look again at the housing question. For some years the County Council have been making feeble attempts to cope with this problem. Slums have been cleared and dwellings erected. But the slum-dwellers have made slums elsewhere, and the rush for the "dwellings" has left thousands unprovided for. And now the housing question has cropped up again, this time in Whitechapel, and in such an acute form that a pretence of doing something must again be made. The *Chronicle* has admitted, and the Council perfectly well knows, that the landlord is at the bottom of the evil, just as the factory lord is at the bottom of the abominations in our industrial system; and when the Council begins to "move," it finds itself face to face with the question of private ownership of houses and land. But as our legislature does not propose to discuss the question of expropriation, which is the only radical cure for these and kindred evils, nothing will be done to bring any appreciable relief.

Such are the fruits we may expect from legislation as predicted even by those who support the wretched farce. And those who agitate for old-age pensions, cry again—legislate! Legislate that the worker who lives to 65 may eke out his misery for a few more years on five shillings per week.

"JUSTICE" IN HOLLAND.

A lecture delivered in Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court Road, December, 1898.

Recognition of Keimpe.

1. At a distance of 75 metres, the same as Wiebren and Marten.
2. *By his trousers.*—When Jemkje opened the upper door (doors are divided into two parts, an upper and a lower part—she recognised him by his trousers. You will, doubtless, acknowledge this to be a very uncertain way of recognition. As a rule, the field-laborers wear the same sort of trousers, their wardrobe is not abundantly provided, and, moreover, in her circumstances at that moment it was very difficult for her to recognise a person by his trousers, because she had just opened the upper part of the door, so that she could see little or nothing of the trousers.

And in consequence of such weak proofs a man is committed to prison for six years!

No other proofs were brought forward.

Properly speaking, we need not prove the innocence of these three men; no, the court of justice has to prove their guilt, and if these proofs can be refuted no condemnation ought to have followed, even in the case of being personally profoundly convinced of their guilt.

We will go a step further and mention what tells very strongly against their guilt.

In the first place, the burglar must have been wounded; for there were drops of blood on the window sill. In the beginning this fact was considered to be of the utmost importance. For this reason the three brothers have been medically examined, their hair was cut off and

their heads microscopically examined; but not the least trace of a wound was to be found on any of them. If the perpetrator of the deed must have been wounded and the accused had no trace of a wound on their bodies, they can not have been the perpetrators.

In the beginning, the witnesses did not suspect the brothers Hogerhuis, and it was not until some time after that they came out with their evidence. Wiebren Hogerhuis was Haitsma's intimate friend; almost daily he visited Haitsma, and more than once the latter requested him to sleep there. So, the morning after the burglary, when Wiebren had heard of it, he repaired to Haitsma's house and assisted Jemkje a little, who was still under the influence of the fright; he swept away the fragments of glass from the floor and also supported Sieds Yansma who was carried wounded to the deaconesses hospital at Leeuwarden. None of the three gave the least sign of suspecting Wiebren to be the perpetrator of the burglary. When Wiebren was arrested for the first time on the Tuesday after the burglary (which had been committed in the night between Thursday and Friday), Haitsma answered Keimpe's question, as to how it happened that Wiebren had been arrested, with these words: "Well, I don't understand it, and Jemkje feels very miserable at it."

And afterwards that man gave quite different evidence!

Wiebren was set at liberty for want of proof, and going home he passed Haitsma's house, where he entered just to tell that he had been released. A merchant, who happened to be there too, declared before the tribunal that Wiebren was uncommonly cordially welcomed. His tobacco pipe was brought with the words: "Your old pipe is still lying there;" he offered him a cup of tea and a piece of cake.—Everything as it is the custom among friends. In the conversation Wiebren said: "Do you know what will give me the most trouble?—That the judge will ask me if I knew you had a bag with money on the side of your bedstead. But did I know this? And Haitsma answered, quieting: "No, you didn't know it; for it was covered by a pillow."

Is it not strange that this same man, who conversed with Wiebren in this way, afterwards acted as principal witness against him?

The evidences were repeatedly different from what they had been before, as is proved by what the president said to Gatse Haitsma and to Jemkje Yansma, when he warned them how tell the truth,—exactly as if he acknowledged that they had been lying like a conjuror!

As a specimen, the evidence given by Sieds Yansma may serve. In the Deaconess Hospital, a very short time after the burglary, he declared to the commissary of police that he was not able to give the least indication. Afterwards he declared that the brothers Hogerhuis might have been the doers. And at length he said: "Then the man in white must have been Wiebren." *Must have been!* Why didn't he say: *was* Wiebren without any doubt? He said himself: "There have been so many people to whom I was obliged to tell stories, that in the end I myself knew no longer what I declared." He had got into a whirlpool, and at last he himself was not able to discern truth from falsehood. A liar should have a good memory.

But now comes the boldest of all. After the burglary Wiebren has slept with Haitsma, at the latter's request, during four successive nights for his greater safety.

If we take into consideration that evidence has been given before the tribunal that Wiebren wrestled with Haitsma on that night in such a way that Haitsma was almost smothered and that his mouth was filled with blood (Wiebren having caught him by the throat), then we cannot understand how the same Haitsma could have invited the same burglar to sleep with him in his bed. That would be as if he had said: I say, Wiebren, you have tried to strangle me on that St. Nicholas night, you have not succeeded and for that reason I will give you an opportunity to try it once more and with better success, therefore I ask you if you will be so kind as to sleep in my bed!

But can this be explained from a psychological point of view?

Perhaps some of you will ask: Cannot these men prove their alibi?

Certainly they can. But who are generally best able to declare if a person is at home at a certain hour? The members of the family, of course. For this reason, the mother and the sister had gone to the session of the tribunal to tell the truth; but, when it was their turn, there were objections to their being heard because they were too near in blood to the accused. If the brothers had been in a brothel that night, the prostitutes would have been allowed to appear as witnesses and they would have been acquitted. But when their mother and sister were going to give evidence that they were at home at that time and quietly abed, they were sent away; their evidence had no value. The evidence of prostitutes had more value than that of the family!

A noble administration of justice under which we are living. And what evidence would that mother and that sister have given? Wiebren came home about ten o'clock, and seeing his mother and sister already undressing to go to bed, he went direct to the back room where his bed was, wished them good night and turned in. Marten was out hunting polecats with a certain Hoitinga. They had not much good luck and, though Marten would have stayed out a little longer—he, one of the supposed burglars,—his companion had enough of it and accompanied him home about eleven o'clock. Marten would never turn in before wishing his mother and his sister a good night; he did so on the night in question, spoke a few words on the inclemency of the weather and after this went to bed. If we would take him to be one of the burglars, we should be obliged to suppose that immediately after his return home he went out again to commit the deed; for Haitsma's house was nearly two miles distant from theirs. And before going out he must have put on other trousers—doubtless to appear in his holiday

attire at the burglary—for, whilst Hoitinga declared that Marten wore his every-day trousers, Jemkje said that he had his Sunday trousers on. How does this tally with Hoitinga's statement?

But the most tragical fate is the third brother's, who had stayed in with his mother and sister all the night.

It was St. Nicholas eve or Santa Claus, and, as is perhaps known to you, this feast is celebrated to a certain extent in the same way in our country as Christmas in yours. On that night it is a custom in the villages with the bakers to raffle for gingerbread or cake. You will easily understand that the nine year old grandson of the old widow, whose mother after her husband's death had returned to her paternal home, would want to try his luck with the dice, the same as his companions. But his grandmother, his mother and his uncle Keimpe objected to his going there. His grandmother tried to explain to him it was better to buy for twopence than to gamble away a penny. Uncle Keimpe made a proposition to have a game of goose for gingerbread nuts. He liked it very much. But it would not do for two persons to play this game; for if one came into the pit and the other into the prison there would be no other person to release them. The boy's mother understood this and she laid down her needlework to play with them. So these three persons were pleasantly playing together. The boy can bear witness to that and so can the mother and the grandmother. It now was after nine o'clock and they began to feel sleepy; consequently, it was not long before the little boy and uncle Keimpe went to bed. So we see that Keimpe has not been out all the night, and he was sleeping quietly when the burglary took place, as the perpetrator of which he has been prosecuted and punished.

It is dreadful to hear what devilish tricks have been used to make witnesses give evidence against the three brothers. Among other things, I call attention to this fact: Hoitinga, a poor man, wrote how the commissary of police has promised him an office if he only declared that the brothers Hogerhuis had committed the deed. And when he said: "Sir, I cannot give this evidence," that commissary of police began to threaten him in different ways. On one side promises, on the other threats—where remains the impartiality of justice? We have here a commissary of police who tempts witnesses into giving evidence by means of promises and threats, and this man is yet in his office.

The advocates complained of their having but two days to study the big case, whereas the instructions had lasted many months. Is that the way to treat such important matters? Does it not seem as if some persons were glad of having the three men in their power, and as if they were afraid that their victims would succeed yet in escaping? Where the case has been conducted in such a partial way, where the president, as it were, put the answers in the mouths of the witnesses and snubbed the accused, where the case has been treated with such a prepossession (*parti pris*), we have cause enough to complain of the dealings of the tribunal and to say that they have not tried to keep up appearances; but that the accused were treated from the beginning as the perpetrators of the deed.

What may have been the reason that the tribunal passed such barbarous sentences on these men? For, even if they had been guilty of the offence they were accused of, even then the punishment is not equal to the crime. A lot of instances might be mentioned where less severe punishments have been given for greater offences. There must be a particular reason as a motive for such a severe sentence. I've long thought of an explanation, and at length I began to see my way. We have to deal here with a law-suit having a social background, with a piece of social history of our day; and, from this point of view, every thing that would otherwise remain inexplicable becomes as clear as daylight to us. Socialism was on trial and the sentence was an act of revenge by the class judges which we have in a class State.

What was the case here?

Socialism is making much progress in the north-western part of the province of Friesland. In all the villages there a great many people joined the Socialist Party. These people heard the preaching of the gospel: every man has the right to live; if each one has a right to live, then no one can have a better right to live than any other one; but, if this is true, he has also a right to possess the means by which he can live. Was not Sbylock right, when he said to the judges: "You take my life, when you take the means by which I live"? We cannot live on theoretical rights, which exist on paper. Year after year, we produce treasures by our labor and when harvest time comes all is laid up in barns, and instead of receiving our share of the produce of our labor we have the freedom to starve, and the owners say to us: "We have no more work for you." Instead of eating together what is produced by our labor, we are dismissed without work and without food. We are still young and strong, we *can* work, we are willing to work, but we are put off with the common story: there is no work. So we are not allowed to work, even when we are willing to do so. But what now? We have a stomach; also our wives and children, and that stomach needs food. By nature we are not like some animals, which do a winter sleep and do not need food. That was the ideal for some employers—if the workingmen were like those animals! But what now; are we to be starved to death? But we don't wish to submit to that, and if society refuses to give us work and denies us our daily bread we will help ourselves, we take what we need. The Liberal school has sounded the praise of self-help, we will apply this theory. Well, then, we follow the lessons of our Liberal masters. And so it happened that in this part of the country night after night potatoes were missing from the heaps that were put into pits in the fields; that now and then sheep were missing in the meadows; that burglaries

were committed here and there; that incendiarism was the order of the day. Never once in all these days were the perpetrators of such a deed found out. This vexed the police, who like to give proofs of their activity by discovering the authors even of the most trifling offences. These burglaries, incendiarisms and robberies formed a series of proofs of the miserable economical condition in which a great part of the population lived. To punish these offences was, therefore, the intention of the government, which used for this purpose the judges offered to it. Nothing was heard of measures to remove the causes of these offences. In spite of the most zealous inquiries and a twofold increase of the gendarmerie, no offenders were found. At length the brothers Hogerhuis are suspected of having committed this burglary. They were used as warning examples in order to put a stop to this state of things, insufferable as it was to all proprietors. The brothers were punished for all the other offences which had never been brought to light. These Socialists have been stigmatised in the eyes of public opinion as thieves to hurt Socialism in their persons and to try to finish it.

People may say whatever they like, we are personally convinced seeing here a social drama enacted before us in which the class of possessors through its instrument, the justice of the class, has been mindful to maintain its power at any cost and, being the most powerful, it did so in the most abominable way. Has not the Public Prosecutor himself given us this idea when he spoke of an attempt at one of the heaviest offences against the right of property; when, at the end of his speech, he said: "The deed they have committed reminds us of the days of the revolution, of a time when special laws were necessary to protect the population of the country. Such facts in a high degree disturb the legal order and make people uneasy, so that Haitsma has even quitted his house where he had spent the whole of his life. These are facts and circumstances such as cannot be tolerated in our society, and when persons are guilty of acts done under such circumstances it occurs to me that there is no reason whatever to plead extenuating circumstances.

The Public Prosecutor is the protector, the maintainer of the existing order of this society; this order is disturbed and the punishment must be severe. Society is in danger. Which society? The capitalist society, and he appears in the character of defender of the legal order.

They call legal order a condition in which persons who are willing to work and who can work are not allowed to work, because it is said: "There is no work!" We call that legal disorder. The attempted manslaughter of that covetous old farmer is to be punished as severely as possible; but the attempt of society to starve to death so many young men and women, their children included, may happen with impunity—nay, that is called the *legal order*, and every one who disturbs such order is a criminal.

There is in Holland a Social Democratic member of parliament who says I am morally responsible for all the burglaries that have been committed; for the persons who committed them acted in consequence of the theories I taught! Ladies and gentlemen, if that Social Democrat means to say that I teach the doctrine that any person whose right to live is denied him—being deprived of the means of life—has a right to take that which he wants, then I face that responsibility and I don't even understand what can be brought against that theory from a Socialist point of view.

Now we have come to the root of the question.

Has man the right to live?

The answer is: Yes, he has.

Has man the right to the means by which he must live?

If not, what signifies the acknowledgment of the right to live?

He cannot live on air, he wants other means; and if society denies him these he is entitled to assume them. And why has he not the means to live? While our earth the common property of all creatures, is made by violence and law the property of some private persons, upon what is the wealth of those private persons based? Upon the right of exploiting the workers, paying them too low wages for what they produce. That is a legal theft, protected by law and justice and police; and when you will assert your right to food, to live you are punished with prison. Has not John Stuart Mill said that the product of labor was distributed inversely with regard to the labor done, in such a way that the greatest part falls to the share of those who never work, the next part to those who work in name only, and so on in a decreasing ratio until the most fatiguing and most trying work secures barely enough to provide common necessities?

I should be able to bring forward as witnesses a great number of the best and most eminent men, who have all vied with each other in acknowledging that the man who is deprived of everything has a right to take what he wants.

F. DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS.

(To be concluded)

PROGRESS.

From *Primitive Man*, by Edward Clodd; pages 195-8.

3. But there is the fact that just as the lower organisms remain as they were from the beginning, and have all along constituted the majority; so the races which have reached a certain stage and have never passed beyond it far outnumber those above them. For progress is a modern idea—a Western idea. The Orientals, from whom we may now except the Japanese, hate it. As Sir Henry Main says in his *Popular Government* "the entire Mohammedan world detests it. The

multitude of coloured men who swarm in the Continent of Africa detest it. The millions on millions of men who fill the Chinese Empire loathe it, and what is more despise it." And as Walter Bagehot says in his brilliant little book *Physics and Politics*, "any progress is extremely rare. As a rule, a stationary state is by far the most frequent condition of man, as far as history describes that condition; the progressive state is only a rare and occasional exception." Barbaric races, and for that matter, civilised races, only in lesser degree, are bound hand and foot by custom, by taboo, by belief in luck and ill-luck paralysing action; and are deterred from doing this or that because of supposed divine sanctions or prohibitions, which thus create a hedge round abuses, illusions and frauds. Moreover, all men are mimics. Captain Palmer relates of the Fiji that "a chief was one day going over a mountain path followed by a long string of his people when he happened to stumble and fall; all the rest of the people did the same, except one man, who was set upon by the rest to know whether he considered himself better than his chief!" And it is only a few years ago, among ourselves, when a royal personage had an affection of the knee which caused her to walk lame, that "society" affected what was nicknamed the "Alexandra limp." The Fijian who refused to fall because his chief had stumbled represented the rare souls who have dared to suggest that such and such a thing may have two sides to it, and who have thus opened the way to inquiry wherein alone is the path of progress. Their fate has been the crucifix and the stake, or long pining years in dungeons. Both vested interest and apathy have been the foes to advancement, so strong is the reluctance to change, so great is the "pain of a new idea"; so dominant the power of feeling over reason, of that wish to believe which demands no effort against that desire to know which involves strenuous inquiry and application. Yes; progress is a modern idea. We have only to think of the state of France before the Revolution, and of the barbarous condition of the Highlanders—a century ago; of the state of England—three-quarters of a century ago—before social reforms were set afoot; of the infamous penal laws in the time of the Georges; of the political disabilities, of the condition of miners and peasants down to our own time; we have only to think of the state of Russia to-day; to learn that progress has only just begun in the wider and nobler meaning that we are attaching to the word. For the increase of knowledge is only an agent of advance in the degree that it sets people thinking about social questions, about the abolition of class privileges; about equality of chance in that struggle for life which becomes ever more acute. So that progress, although too often reckoned in terms of expansion of trade and wealth, of inventions of new machinery, and of discoveries of new resources of the earth, is, happily, coming to mean more than these, even the disappearance of the artificial state which makes life hideous and hopeless to the many, and the creation of a public sentiment which shall hold the worker in honour, and regard only the wilfully idle as disgraced. Nor this alone. The more equitable distribution of the means of life is an object to be further striven after in the degree that it contributes to that well-ordered use of opportunity in which education is the chief directing power. It is true that the history of both individuals and nations, while it in large degree explains the causes of growth, of arrest, and of decline, also confirms the lesson of man's impotence before the great forces of nature. "Limits we did not set condition all we do." But within those limits there is such room for the play of human activity that the wise expenditure of this should be our chief solicitude.

"No eye could be too sound

To observe a world so vast,

No patience too profound

To sort what's here amass'd;

How man may here best live no care too great to explore."

Libertarian Literature.

We have received the following papers and pamphlets:

L'Anticlericale, Nos. 1-7, weekly journal of the anti-clerical party, 7 Rue des Cannettes, Paris.

L'Humanité Nouvelle, No. 19, monthly international review, Schleicher Frères, 15 Rue des Saintes-Pères, Paris.

De Vrije Socialist, weekly, F. Domela Nieuwenhuis, 39 Alexander Boerstraat, Amsterdam.

El Derecho a la Vida, Anarchist Communist journal appearing "when it can;" subscription voluntary; 305 Casilla de Correo, Montevideo.

El Porvenir Social, Nos. 2-4, Cruz 21, Puerto Rico.

Ciencia Social, No. 5, monthly review, Calle Corrientes 2041, Buenos Aires.

La Esclavitud Antigua y la Moderna; La Sociedad, su Pasado, su Present y su Porvenir; pamphlets by Dr. Emilio Z. Arana, 259 Casilla de Correo, Rosario de Santa Fe, Argentine Republic.

La Familia en la Anarquía, pamphlet published by a La Plata group, Calle 49, No. 659, La Plata.

War against War, weekly journal of the International Crusade for Peace, Crusade Headquarters, 9 Arundel Street, Strand.

"Free Society." An Exponent of Anarchist-Communism
13 Oak Grove Av., San Francisco, Cal. U. S.
London agent: L. Baron, 16 Parfett Street, Commercial Road, E.

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NOTES.

"BOURGEOIS' PETS."

"Anarchist" writes to the *Bulletin* as follows: "The hand of fate has pressed heavily upon Australia's three Anarchist editors. David A. Andrade conducted the first Australian Anarchist paper, *Honesty*, an organ of the Boston Individualist school, published ten years ago in Melbourne. He had severe troubles, was plunged into destitution by business failure, went 'on the land' at South Sassafras, village settlement, and, after a long struggle, embittered by domestic afflictions, lost everything, health included, by the great bush fires of last summer. J. A. Andrews started *Anarchy*, the *Revolt*, *Reason*, and the *Radical*, organs of Anarchist Communism, in Sydney and Melbourne, at Sydney was twice imprisoned for his publications; after failing at Melbourne, was offered a post on the *Firebrand*, an American Anarchist paper, and while on the way (wholly by the help of friends) to reach it, learned that the paper had been prosecuted and suppressed; made just a guinea per week in Sydney by literary work and couldn't look out for anything additional because he was so occupied with enjoying the most luxuriously prosperous twelvemonth he ever had for ten years. W. R. Winspear ran the *Australian Radical* as an Individualist Anarchist paper, at Hamilton, N.S.W., for a year after the demise of *Honesty*. He got into difficulties, and, in the carelessness of desperation, laid himself open to a police-court charge in connection with some petty business transaction out Newtown St. Peter's way. He received a sentence, and a fortnight later his wife committed suicide in the agony of hopelessness, leaving his five children totally unprovided for. Thus culminates the long-drawn tragedy."

We wonder how many Social Democrats would like to be petted in this style? Such has been the life of Anarchists almost since the inception of the word, and some day the workers will learn who are their real friends.

"ANARCHY IN THE CHURCH."

Such is the "alarming" announcement made by the press respecting the present agitation in the ecclesiastical realm. A terrible picture must rise up in the mind's eye of prelate and bishop as the awful word sounds on their ears like a death-knell to their long cherished authority. Perhaps they even have visions of bombs and outrages, and in their dreams see their churches filled with rebels in broadcloth with the (un)beatific visages of Scotland Yard flitting about in the dim religious light. Truly there is no telling what may come to pass now-a-days. We, however, marvelling how Anarchism could possibly have got into such bad company, have been making careful inquiries the result of which is quite reassuring. The "Anarchy" in the Church is only one of the manifestations of capitalistic anarchy which we meet with every day and which, though differing as it does from true Anarchy as darkness from light, nevertheless needs defining to check the numerous misrepresentations of an unscrupulous press. Consequently there is no cause for anxiety. Anarchism is safe, however the Church may be; and the bishops may rest in their beds in such peace as their wealth, their power, their humbug and their hypocrisy leave their consciences free to enjoy.

PANACEAS AND ECONOMICS.

It is becoming more and more obvious every day how the eternal economic problem rises up, ogre-like to neutralise and destroy the good effects of the well-meaning efforts of philanthropists and reformers to palliate the more glaring evils of the present day. Murder and suicide, robbery, overcrowding, prostitution—how little need one reflect to find at the root of them all, in nine cases out of ten this omnipresent cause. Consumption, we are told, is to be cured, and with what heartfelt satis-

faction we must all receive the news! Thousands of unfortunate people, mostly workers, will be saved if the remedy can be applied. And what is the remedy? Abundance of good food and pure air: in short, a hygienic life. How simple; how natural. At last, one would think, we could go ahead and eradicate this scourge. But alas for all our hopes! good food and pure air are only obtainable by the well-to-do; and the secretary of the North London Hospital for Consumption reminds us that "many poor sufferers die or become so much worse as to be quite unsuitable for admission before their turn comes." And again:

"The majority of the patients are of the very poor—those who from the nature of their occupations are most susceptible to the disease—tailors and seamstresses, printers, dressmakers, and cooks whose occupations keep them in stuffy, ill-ventilated and overheated rooms, and the change to fresh air and liberal diet literally works wonders in their condition."

"To the question whether a patient has been here before, the reply is often 'Oh, yes! two years ago. I got quite well, and have followed my calling until now, when I have again become ill,'—the inevitable result of a return to former conditions of life and work."

PARLIAMENTARY LABOR MEN. THEIR AIMS—THEIR RESULTS.

Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb, of London, says the Tasmanian *Federalist*, were walking up and down the cities of Australia asking questions and making notes. They waited on Minister Peacock, of Victoria, the other day, to ask questions about the Factories Act. Among other things, Mrs. Webb said: "How is it that you in Victoria, with no Labor Party, have an advanced Factories Act and New South Wales, with a Labor Party holding the balance of power, has not?" The Chief Secretary was thinking of his own troubles just at the time, and, for a moment, forgot that a lady was the questioner. "Oh," said he, off-handedly, "that crowd over in Sydney is no damned good, that's why." The questioner dropped her eyes and considered, while Mr. Peacock quickly and laboriously explained what he meant. "Yes," said the visitor at last; "we saw a good deal of them, and that is what we thought, only" and here she smiled sweetly "of course, we could hardly express it so vividly." And then the Chief Secretary blushed.

We beg leave to suggest to Mrs. Webb that she interview some of the English Social Democrats on the same subject, comparing the German Social Democratic Party (with its fifty-four members in the Reichstag) and Socialist legislation in Germany, and the English Social Democratic Parties (with no members in the House of Commons) and Socialistic legislation in England. Would their answer be the same as the Victoria man's, "That crowd over in Berlin are no damned good, that's why"?

THE TRUTHSEEKER.

We are glad to see the bold attitude taken by this plucky little free-thought journal of the north. The January number contains articles by MacQueen and W. F. Barnard, MacQueen particularly dealing with some points in the Anarchist Communist's position. Freethought journals have not always been so fair to Anarchists and the *Truthseeker* is setting a commendable example and one that will be appreciated by all true lovers of liberty. By referring to our back page readers will see its price and where it can be obtained.

As we are going to press the sad news reaches us of the death of Annie the youngest daughter of our esteemed comrade, Domela Nieuwenhuis. The loss of their bright and promising child will we fear be an exceptionally heavy blow to both parents. All comrades join us in our sincerest expressions of sympathy and regret.

WEST HAM NOTES.

We in West Ham have the first Labor Council in England, and they tell us they are in for business. Out of 48 members who compose the Town Council, 20 are S.D.F. or I.L.P. with 7 who are trade unionists, giving them a majority of 6 or 7 over the others. They got in chiefly over the Water Famine and the Housing Question, as rents are going up enormously. The scheme put forward to catch votes was that the only way to fight landlords is to build sufficient houses, to be owned by the municipality, to compete with the landlords. I wonder where they are going to build houses, seeing they own no land, and to buy it means borrowing money (to buy back stolen property) to be repaid in thirty years, which would also mean good tenants or the municipal authorities would evict them. I wonder how the casual workers would be able to pay to the municipality any more than to the existing landlords; and if you do a landlord for rent you can find another landlord, but I question whether you could get another house off the municipality if once you are evicted from their houses. We have in this borough from 3,000 to 10,000 men out of work all the year round; how are they going to pay rent if they are in a municipal building? Then, again, we are having the main road lit up by the electric light, so as to make the

shops owned by the middle class more attractive; but the back streets and slums are ignored altogether. The rents are higher and yet rates are sevenpence in the pound less than three years ago. So, with all their scheming they are helping landlords instead of ending their existence.

The middle class who pay their rates independent of their rent are reaping an advantage, so no wonder they are interested in keeping rates down; but for these men who have just got elected to come out on the corner and tell us how they are saving rates, and yet rents are going up, is absurd. Will they tell the workers how they are better off through this?—no fear. We also have, through competition, halfpenny omnibus and tram fares; yet they are talking of taking over these in the interest of the workers, because competition is bad for the worker; and in *The West Ham Worker*, a paper owned by the I.L.P., they advocate competition in houses to break down landlordism, while in the next breath they tell us we must end competition by owning everything under State control. Fine economics, I must say. These men either don't see or won't see that, to realise Socialism, we must have for one thing *decentralisation*; for, if we wish for fresh air and natural food, we must go where they are to be got, and that involves an entirely different scheme from that put forward by these so-called leaders of men.

Keir Hardie, who was down here recently congratulating the workers on their magnificent victory, said: the first thing the present Council should do was to get powers to tax ground values. Fancy taxing a man owning this land, but who produces nothing!

Where will he get the money from, but out of the producer? Taxing ground rents means higher house rents, or what else it means is not clear to me.

Now, we are often asked, what are we doing to alter the present system? Well, seeing we believe in minding our own business, we refuse to vote for men to make laws to legalise our own slavery; we refuse to go for soldiers, men-of-war's men or even policemen to protect the property stolen from the workers. That is one way of putting our ideas into practice. But we also believe in enlightening our fellow slaves so that they may avoid the pitfalls of the politicians and the many false "friends" who would use them for their own ambitious ends. We want to get them into line with the Anarchists so that they may once for all end their subjection to the parasites of our present society, and by spreading knowledge and dispelling ignorance enable them to gain that economic and political freedom which will ensure peace among men in a way never dreamed of nor cared for by the Tsar

R. PEDDIE.

ARE MEN BAD?

An old saw has it, "It is easy to criticise," and, unfortunately, thoughtless criticism, too often given for its mere sake, is the order of the day. How much of the energy of the world is spent at "pulling at straws," in knocking down imaginary skittles!

One of the most common of all the objections urged against Anarchism is that it presupposes a state of perfection for which men are naturally unfit. Man is bad or indifferent, and any loosening of the restrictions in Society would mean more or less complete reversion to barbarism.

Considered superficially, this argument holds good, for one can recall dozens of cases in which natural villainy has prompted men in various acts. But we averagely find that in proportion as compulsion or trust form a factor in social energy, antisocial or social behaviour results. There is, certainly, a strong incentive to antisocial action to-day. The struggle for life is quite unnecessarily carried on on the lowest possible plane, that of sustenance; surrounded by artificiality, urged onward only by the lower physical needs, what wonder is it that men grab, deceive, and even go out of their way to injure their fellows? They but tread the line of least resistance in so doing.

The phantoms raised up by our opponents, are but the natural results of an artificial equilibrium, the temporary outcome of the attempt of successful men to maintain a society that has resulted in more than a natural recompense to them for their labour.

It is an accepted truth that the organism tends to adapt itself to its surroundings, following in so doing the line of least resistance. Applied to human aggregations, one sees clearly enough that, physically, the average tendency is a conservative one, the character of the group largely shaping the individuals. The safeguard of progress in a society void of artificiality, is to be found in the tendency to vary, applied first mentally, and if successful in that sphere, physically. And in a society, the binding link of which is social welfare, the conserving element is balanced by the progressive element, the success of either being exactly commensurate with their respective social values.

This continuous variation, this adaptation to ever changing environments, is the prominent feature in all nature; it is life—progress!

Society, as we know it, has heaped around it a whole host of worthless restrictions, the one result of which is to direct energy into artificial channels. Where you have artificiality, you have "goodness" and "badness" representing for the most part energies that are interpreted by the quiescence or rebellion of the individual against the restrictions placed upon him.

Man is not good, bad nor indifferent: he is like other organisms—plastic; suited to the needs of the moment, shaped by his peculiar physical and psychical environments.

The question of the badness or goodness of men does not trouble the Anarchist. Perfection is ever changing, constantly urging onward.

Anarchism represents the cry for clear roads. Where our good friends go astray is in supposing that Anarchism is some glorious system, the plans of which are to be estimated in terms of to-day, whereas it represents a method by which the manifold energies of man may be efficiently employed in that search after the everchanging ideal, the necessity of which is life.

Clear the road: let no restriction be placed upon men's actions and thoughts; let proper competition take place between the various energies of the human organism, and as surely as the turbulent head waters of the stream merge into the peaceful river, will these energies grow into their natural outcome, social life.

W. MACQUEEN.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

I.—P. J. Prudhon. *What is Property?*

Translated from the French by Benj. R. Tucker. London: William Reeves, Fleet Street.

Prudhon was certainly one of the most powerful and striking authors among the French Socialists of 1840-1860. His criticisms against the existing capitalist and political organisation, based as they are on the economical, social and moral enslavement of the people, these criticisms of Prudhon we recognise as the most courageous and original in the whole of Socialist literature. Especially famous is his book on property now translated in English by B. R. Tucker.

When first published, in 1840, *What is Property?* with its answer, "property is robbery!" the young and unknown author at once became famous. The originality of his ideas, brilliancy of dialectics, especially boldness and courage in exposition and argument produced almost a cataclysmic impression. The Government thought to prosecute Prudhon, the Besançon repudiated him, while the capitalist press had not enough words with which to censure him.

Even now, as the reader will see, the book is full of interest and provokes a great many ideas even on the secondary questions. To give a hint of Prudhon's vigorous manner, I quote here a few short passages.

"We shall see that equality of possessions, equality of rights, liberty, will, personality, are so many identical expressions of one and the same idea, the right of preservation and development; in a word, the right of life, against which there can be no prescription until the human race has vanished from the face of the earth" (page 111). "What a profound disgust fills my soul while discussing such simple truths!... can force, in default of reason, alone introduce them into our laws" (page 28).

"In politics every one is governed in his choice of party by his passion and his interests; the mind is submitted to the imposition of the will; there is no knowledge, there is not even a shadow of certainty. In this way, general ignorance produces general tyranny; and while liberty of thought is written in the charter, *slavery of thought, under the name of majority rule, is decreed by the charter*" (page 110).

We strongly recommend to our readers this first volume of Prudhon's most famous work.

II.—*Bulletin of the Department of Labour*, 1898. Washington: Edited by C. D. Wright, Commissioner, and O. W. Weaver.

In the September number of this splendid and always very interesting bulletin, we find a first attempt to compile statistics of the variation in the "Wages in the United States and Europe, 1870 to 1898." Until now the figures were not numerous enough to make a definite statement on the nature of the law of the increase and decrease of wages. But, nevertheless, we congratulate the editors for their initiative in such an important inquiry. Who knows but that they will be able to make a concise and also astonishing statement as sixty years ago the great statistician Quetelet proved to "civilized Europe that under the blessed laws of capitalism the attempts against private property are punished more rigorously than those against the safety and life of human beings, especially against the poor."

III.—Saverio Merlino. *Formes et Essence du Socialisme*. Paris, 1898. V. Giard and E. Brière, éditeurs. Price 3 fr. 50 c.

This new work of our friend S. Merlino, bears all the merits and unhappily also the defects of his literary and social works. Master of German, English, French, Spanish, and his mother Italian, our friend is one of the best read men in Europe on Socialism, sociology and law. A man of the highest social and moral ideals he is conscientious in every detail of his work. Just all these qualities we have found in his latest book. Expositions of the teachings of different schools of modern Socialism are given without any animosity, and with complete knowledge of the subject. For all these qualities we warmly recommend it to the students of modern Socialist schools and parties. But our friend was always a victim of some juridical superstitions and prejudices. He, for instance, firmly believes in the old metaphysical and idealistic aberration that it is not the economical and intellectual development of a nation which is reflected in its legislation, but on the contrary, that laws and legislation are creating the customs, life and progress of the nation. To this old prejudice we must ascribe his astonishing affirmation that "the social question is a juridical one" ("la question sociale est une question juridique").

That is a flagrant contradiction of all Socialist authors, from R. Owen and Fourier down to the statute of the "International Working Men's Association," with its famous declaration "that the *economical* emancipation of the workers must be the main objects of the movement." We think our friend Merlino is in contradiction also with the whole modern science of sociology. And that is a pity to see a man of his value and learning under such "visilleries," as the French call them.

IV.—Jules Guesde. *Le Socialisme au jour le jour* ("Socialism Day by Day"). Paris, 1899. V. Giard and E. Brière, éditeurs.

The book of the "chief of the French scientific Socialists" has no science and no Socialism in it. Strange irony and humbug of our time: learned masters of literature, languages and philosophy like Merlino, or our learned and truly great scientists, E. Reclus, P. Kropotkin, E. Malatasta, and others are representatives of Socialism in its ignorance! On the contrary, Mr. Guesde, who knows no other European language than his own, whose general knowledge is that of the average Parisian journalist of the boulevard, otherwise a patented ignoramus, this gentleman is a chief of scientism in Socialism. Poor science! poor Socialism; and what an unlimited emptiness is displayed in a big volume of 488 pages! What a quantity of noisy and bombastic phrases! "A party lives only on discipline!" (We thought by the principles the parties are distinct). Discipline is for Mr. Guesde the last word of the "science" of Parliamentary socialism.

It may be in his own case he is right; for people of his knowledge it would be useful to go to the evening school where he will get discipline and perhaps at the same time learn that when a person is writing a book he ought to know something about his subject.

W. TCHERKESOV.

AMERICAN NOTES.

The eighteenth annual convention of the American Federation of Labor was convened at Kansas City this year. One hundred and forty-five delegates were present at the opening session, making it the largest in numbers of any convention yet held by the Federation. Gompers was there as usual, with his long-winded speech in reply to the address of welcome by M. F. Bradley of the local Industrial Council. Gompers has learned a lot since he became President of the A. F. of L. some sixteen years ago, and one of the things he has learned is how to talk for two hours without saying anything. About the only thing he said of interest, was that the feeling of solidarity among the workers of the world was growing to such an extent that the exchange and acceptance of Union cards was being adopted internationally. This is most encouraging and of far more importance than the rest of the report, which told how their committee, Gompers, Morrison, etc., had hung around the White House to get a chance to shake hands with McKinley and talk to the tool of the Trusts about the rights of Labor.

The spirit of radicalism is beginning to manifest itself in the United States; for, although trade unionism is having a steady growth, the more radical of the western unions—who are what is called "Middle of the road" Populists (meaning, no compromise with the Republicans or Democrats)—and some eastern cities, like Cleveland, which are of a strong Socialistic nature, are getting tired of the platitudes of such men as Gompers, McGuire, O'Connell & Co., who, while saying: "Don't bring politics into your union," have made the A. F. of L. a mere annex to the Democratic Party. The Federation shows a net increase of but sixty-three members for the year 1898. This looks bad for an organization of nearly a million workers; but is explained by the fact that twenty-two organisations surrendered their charters during the year, among them the Western Federation of Miners with a membership of over 14,000. This latter union is the one that decided two years ago to set aside a portion of their income to buy rifles for their members to fight plutocracy in the coming struggle between the workers and the capitalists. They have started or are about to start a Western Federation of Labor, the A. F. of L. being too conservative for them. Labor politics in America are on a par with Capitalist politics, and are, I fear, too complex a subject to tackle in the columns of *Freedom*, as it would require several pages to make it understandable; but the present case of the A. F. of L. seems to me to be similar to that of the Trades and Labor Assembly of Chicago several years ago. The Assembly was in the hands of some corrupt labor politicians for a number of years and, try how they would, the better class of delegates could not wrest it from their grasp; finally, as a last resort, the unions began to secede and soon there were but a few unions left; another central body was formed, called The Labor Congress, where the rotten element was left out; this in turn was succeeded by the Chicago Federation of Labor, which also kept the fakirs out, and to-day that body is clean or comparatively so. This, I believe, will be the history of the A. F. of L. The Radicals and Socialists have tried for years to oust Gompers and have failed. It will be a good thing for the labor movement in America when they succeed.

The report of Secretary Morrison showed that in addition to the Western Federation of Miners as mentioned above, twenty-one other unions, with a total membership of 412, also surrendered their charters, three local unions were suspended and ninety-eight were dropped for non-payment of dues. The heaviest item of expense during the year was the cost of the legislative committee, a trifle over £390 being spent in this direction. 'Tis always so. According to the Secretary's report 260 strikes occurred during 1898, involving 22,311 workers of the Federation; out of that 160 were won, 29 compromised, 36 lost and 35 pending. The number of persons benefited was 19,367, and 3,102 did not receive substantial benefit.

The Machinists (Engineers) and the Compositors are quarrelling as to who shall control the linotype machines. At the inception of the machines the Comps. controlled them; then they had an interchange of cards with the Machinists, and now the latter want to control them exclusively. Meanwhile the capitalistic shareholders grin.

C. J. Kent, of Lincoln, Populist Labor Commissioner for Nebraska and a personal friend of W. J. Bryan, introduced an anti-expansion resolution and, after a five hours' debate, the following day the Convention adopted the following resolution by Henry Lloyd of Boston (one of the fraternal delegates to the Bristol Congress last summer):

"Whereas, as a result of the recent war with Spain, a new and far-reaching policy, known as imperialism or expansion, is about to thrust upon us a large standing army and an autocratic navy. This Convention offers its protest, and calls upon its officers to use all power to defeat it."

Harry is a good fellow and, what's rather rare among labor leaders in the United States, is honest; but, as the colored gentleman from the south would say, "He don' no whar he at." When he was in Europe last summer he was almost a Socialist, visiting Liebknecht and other Socialists who are not half as radical as an American Populist. And when in England he felt quite sorry because Social Democrats told him John Burns was doing the dirty work for the Liberals. When he gets back to the United States he waxes wroth at the Social Democrats, and the papers tell us: Harry Lloyd, the conservative economist (I wonder how he likes his title), thrashed the Socialists at the Convention. The anti-expansion resolution showed one thing that most people knew before: that the A. F. of L. receives most of its inspiration from the Democratic Party. Well, let us thank the stars or any other old thing that they are not worse—they might be Republicans!

A resolution was adopted placing the Federation on record to send a delegate to the "Peace" Congress of Nations proposed by the Tzar. Most Anarchists think they would have done more for the cause of peace if they had contributed the expense money of that delegate to the Doukhoborts.

Probably the funniest thing that happened at the Convention was the speech of the English delegates, Thorne and Inskip. This is how the *Globe Democrat* of St. Louis tells it: "Mr. Thorne spoke with enthusiasm of the condition across the water. The particular burden of Mr. Thorne's talk was that American organised labor should strive constantly for better organisation and to wield an ever-growing power in politics. In England, said he, one great element of organised labor's power was the fact that political positions were held by so great a percentage of unionists." Where, Mr. Thorne, in the L.C.C. or the House of Commons? If in the former, we beg to remind you that the London Trades Council are continually censuring the L.C.C. for its action in labor matters; and if the latter, it is only a few months ago that *Justice* alluded to the labor members in the House of Commons as "those dumb dogs." We doubt very much if Will Thorne the Socialist would get on a London platform and talk about the influence the labor men wield here in politics; but then Will Thorne the Socialist in London and Will Thorne the Trade Unionist in America are one and the same man, and yet so different. The only way I can account for it is by that old Social Democratic doctrine: "Man is the creature of his environment," and when Thorne heard Gompers, Lloyd, etc., denouncing Socialism he became a creature of his environment and kept his Socialism in the background. "Delegate Inskip went on to express his belief in the principle of arbitration, and enumerated instances of the settlement of British strikes by arbitration." What a bad memory some people have. Inskip quite forgot the Engineers' and the Welsh Miners' strikes and how they were *not* settled by arbitration. Maybe it was the weather or, perhaps, the company he was in, at any rate he forgot.

It gives us great pleasure to report a little revival in our propaganda in the east,* and especially in New York and Philadelphia. On Jan. 5th a large meeting was held in Cooper Union, New York, to protest against the Anti-Anarchist Conference recently convened at Rome by the powers that be. The meeting was a tremendous success, the hall being packed to suffocation and the speeches received with the greatest enthusiasm. When it is known that Cooper Union packed will hold some 2,500, it can be seen that the meeting was a large one. The chairman was John H. Cook, of Providence, and a right good chairman too. Speeches in English were delivered by our indefatigable comrade Emma Goldman, George Brown the philosophical shoemaker of Philadelphia, who came out of his retreat long enough to make an excellent speech, not fiery but logical and to the point. Come again, George. Professor Horwitch and Mr. Laevi of the Social Democratic Party also spoke and showed the world that it is possible to be a Social Democrat and yet find common ground where they can work with Anarchists. Comrades Esteve in Spanish, Dumas in French, Garcenia in Italian and Janoffskey in Yiddish spoke well, as those who understood them can testify. The comrades all worked hard—especially Emma Goldman, as in spite of many obstacles she worked night and day for two weeks, and as a result saw her work crowned with success. Bravo comrades! Thrice bravo, Emma Goldman!!!

Emma Goldman goes to Barre, Vermont, on Jan. 20th to lecture four times, returning to New York Feb. 1st, and on the 8th begins her western tour, which will extend over six months and take her as far south as Texas, as far west as San Francisco and as far north as Seattle, Wash.; she may go as far south as New Orleans and other southern cities, that have remained untouched by any Anarchist since the days of Josiah Warren, an Individualist Anarchist who preceded Proudhon. What a lot of work *could* be done if we only had a handful of active comrades.

* We have very little news of the west, and would be very glad if comrades would send us a few items of news from time to time.—Ed.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

The flooding of the country with the supplement to the first number of W. T. Stead's *War against War*, the weekly gazette of the International Crusade for Peace, recalls one's mind to Russia and the Tsar's Rescript. Anarchists are peace-loving people, but knowing perhaps more of the seamy side of government than such peace-at-any-price men as Stead and the posse of somewhat hysterical clergy who flocked to St. James' Hall on Dec. 18th at the call of this modern Peter the Hermit, they may be excused for not having publicly enrolled themselves beneath his banner, and for giving as a reason the answer of the Ambassador of whom our Peter demanded why he sneered at the Tsar's Rescript,—*Because I don't like humbug*. Filled with the fiery earnestness of his belief, the old Peter would never have styled himself as did the modern one, "a harum-scarum fliberty-gibbet;" still, this is becoming modesty in a man who has had a personal interview with the Autocrat of Russia; but again we may be excused, however good his intentions, if we put less faith in a fliberty-gibbet and more in our own perspicacity and the dictum of the statesmen whose letters of sympathy figured at the meeting, that however beautiful the sentiment of universal peace there are difficulties in the way of its attainment. Who, indeed, should know better than these gentlemen the quicksands over which the *ignis-fatuus* of Peace floats? who should know better than Salisbury, Muravieff & Co. that the "difficulties" are and will be the result of State craft and ambition; that the people may pray for disarmament, but that the people never yet got what they prayed for unless the government first chose that it should have it? "Russian statesmen are not fools," said one speaker. We rather think not! Stead himself says that Russia will be able to put, when the military organisation is complete, seven millions of trained soldiers in the field. With an army of seven millions and an ice-bound coast, what have Russian Statesmen to fear from invasion on the part of the nations around? Nothing. Who would go to war with Russia? No one. What they do fear, for Russian statesmen, unlike the English, are not content to let the future shift for itself, what they do fear is internal disintegration; and this, a danger of slow but certain growth, has become one that in Russia as in Italy can no longer be ignored. Local insurrection may be put down anywhere with a squadron of cavalry and some police rifles; but an uprising of a nation driven to desperation by the shortsighted and inhuman policy of the ten or a dozen men who hold the reins of government, that is not to be put down without a loss which may mean ruin.

Stead reports the Tsar, in allusion to our present civilisation, to have said: "What does it mean? On the top, a few very rich and comfortable; down below, a great mass of poor people whose condition is not very good. Between the few on the top who are well off and the ever-increasing multitudes of those who are below there is a great gulf fixed. Brooding discontent ripens into Socialism and afterwards develops into all kinds of Anarchism. No, I do not find it good." Speaking of the cost of a war, he adds: "We are perfecting our modern weapons of destruction to such an extent that the mortality among the officers (the men are not mentioned!) will be so great that when the war is over the pillars of the State will have perished." Now, if army officers, according to H.I.M., be the pillars of the State, can the wish to reduce their number be sincere? He goes on to say that a victorious war would entail the bankruptcy of the treasury and the killing out of the leading and directing chiefs of society, and that as a result there would be nothing to look forward to beyond a terrible heritage of revolutionary Anarchy. As a rule most "directing chiefs" take very good care of their precious lives both in and out of war—there is no fear of their going under; the Russian treasury certainly would; but the nightmare that clearly disturbs the slumbers of Nicholas II. and his ministers, is it not portrayed in the prophetic words: "war would entail a terrible heritage of revolutionary Anarchy"? Why? Because the manhood of the Russian nation, all that is best and strongest and noblest in it, is slowly verging towards revolt. He knows that all over his empire, in every corner of the European continent, wherever the Russians, exile or not, are gathered together, there is the band of young and high-souled men and women who long and pray and wait and work, no matter what the suffering and self-sacrifice thereby entailed, for the regeneration of their beloved country. Anarchism they do not want, that may develop later; their one dream is of a government with popular representation; a government that shall be clean and just and incorruptible, that shall not be composed of irresponsible police agents and unscrupulous military tribunals with power at the stroke of a pen to expatriate its brightest intellects to the furthestmost limits of civilisation, there to languish in a mental solitude that drives to despair and death; that shall not, as in Finland and Poland, brand the iron of conquest with such ferocity into the hearts of a people whose one crime is patriotism, that there is not a Pole to-day but whose breast is filled with undying hatred against the authors of his country's wrongs, nor a Fin who would not shed his last drop of blood in defence of inherited privileges.

East, west, north and south, Russia is on the stir; Tsar and ministers note the ripple; if they do not dam the stream now or humour this waking child who asks only for food, education and humane treatment, the stream may develop into a raging torrent, the child into a maddened giant. He would smother or fight Socialism at home; that at least is one if not the sole reason why the Tsar preaches universal Peace abroad. For there is the pin that pricks. Democracy, the passive beast that has been ridden on the curb since States arose, is beginning to show that he can throw his rider; when he does that there will be a general foundering of thrones and dynasties and the "few very rich and comfortable on the top" will find themselves at the

bottom. Surely this presentiment is enough to make the finest Pommery turn bitter in royal mouths and to lead a less thoughtful man than Nicholas to ask for a truce in which to put his house in order? Practically, he is but the propounder of an idea originally conceived by Christian of Denmark and, before him, of the Roman emperor, Probus, who actually put it in experiment, with an unexpected result, for his soldiers tiring of the ploughshare rose and slew him.

Stead incidentally remarks that twenty-five years ago monarchs were regarded as the chief enemies of the human race. A good many people still retain that opinion, as they impersonate a certain regime, but then these people have not been to Livadia. "One does not talk to an emperor every day," says our simple Peter. There must be something elevating, let us say, as well as sweet in the flavor of Russian shoe-polish, to judge by the fulsome adulation indulged in by English journalists and clergy over the paternal government of Russia on their return home after a lick at the Imperial shoe-leather. Who knows but what if the Tsar had the courage to receive a deputation of Anarchists, the aroma of an Imperial and Russian court might so enervate these ravening wolves of society as to send them back bleating like lambs? Who that reads has forgotten the cleric who went through all the Siberian prisons "by special permission," and never saw a dirty cell or heard of an act of brutality? To-day Privy Councillor Salomon of the Prisons Administration dismisses eighty officials for cruelty in one Siberian district alone, and admits that political prisoners are entirely at the mercy of the police. There is a Russian proverb which we commend to the notice of statesmen at the present juncture—Peace comes after Pudding; don't expect peace abroad or at home, that is if you are sincere in desiring it, until you have given the peoples some pudding.

Our New York comrades have been holding a meeting "to commemorate the failure of the Anti-Anarchist Conference." It seems a little early for such a commemoration; beyond the refusal of England, Switzerland, Belgium and France to bind themselves to extradite foreign Anarchists on demand, the points on which the international police and diplomats have agreed are already being enforced. The Prussian Home Secretary has ordered that as in the case of "common offenders" anthropometrical measurement shall be immediately resorted to in regard to all Anarchist suspects in Germany, his first victim being Adolf Brand of Berlin, editor of a paper. It was senseless provocation of this description that embittered the Russian extremists against Mezentzeff. In this connection a notice to be often read in the smaller hotels of America arises to the mind—*Don't blow out the Gas!* This is for the farmers; not a few of whom, having puffed out this insidious candle, have laid their simple heads on the pillow and awoke in heaven. It would seem unnecessary, were it not the fact that the innocent are very gullible, to remind the unwary that now England and especially London is becoming the sole refuge of distressed foreign comrades, that foreign agents will transfer their sphere of activity to this country. *Agents provocateurs* have not been unknown in England. There are plenty of men of the Coulon, Drion, Beach and "Jones" type left, who will sell their brother for half-a-crown and call it patriotism. It is only three months since a case of this sort, in which the action of the police was described as "a wicked, malicious and scandalous plot laid to entrap a stranger," aroused the indignation of a southern county. Police ethics are not to be understood of common men. But when the fiat has gone forth that a Cause is damned, then be wary. Correspondence is easily tampered with at the local post office; the cheery-spoken individual who claps you on the shoulder and at first sight offers you that tongue-loosening, if desirable, article called "a drink," had best be looked at askance; otherwise you may find when you get home that he has been asking curious questions about yourself or this or the other comrade. To keep your ears and eyes open and your mouth closed, is the first, second and third duty of the conscientious rebel. It seems as childish to remind comrades of these simple things as to bid them not to blow out the gas, yet it is just these simple things that, being forgotten, sometimes determine the welfare or fate of another.

At present Americans seem divided between elation at the fact that the Chicago draper's daughter, sister to Joseph Leiter of wheat corner infamy, who as Lady Kedleston has become the "American Queen of India," rules countless millions of British subjects, and perplexity as to how they themselves are to rule the Filipinos. Aguinaldo was promised independence by a nation which has twice itself fought for independence and preaches that governments can only derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. The Cubans and Filipinos have fought vigorously for liberty and, till the contrary is proved, are fit to possess it. America's demand to Spain was that she should withdraw her army and officials from Cuba, giving the people complete independence. On their refusal, hostilities commenced. By right of conquest America now occupies Cuba and the Philippines and the "complete independence" promised the inhabitants means—how well one knows the old story: 1. An army of occupation to "preserve order." 2. The provocation of disorder by said army owing to differences in race, speech, customs and prejudices. 3. The inevitable misunderstandings which will lead to harshness and oppression on one side and resistance on the other. 4. The restriction of liberty and permanent occupation. That the Filipinos through successful resistance against a powerful oppressor have gained the right to self-government, matters little to a nation which with the watchword Liberty on its lips is yet about to scoop up revenues and people into its hungry palm and, under cover of raising an inferior race, to plant Despotism in its midst. To fully appreciate the blessings of modern Republicanism, we have but to turn to France in

Madagascar and the United States in its attitude towards Aguinaldo, to know that in this as in every other form of government based upon compulsion, it is not the poor and oppressed who fill the thoughts of conquering rulers but the "few very rich and comfortable at the top."

WORK FOR ALL.

COMRADES,—I think that most of you, if not all, will agree with me that our movement is rather dull here and that something ought to be done to stir and put new life into it. I therefore propose the formation of a group for the distribution of our literature. Now, in making this proposition, I have two things in my mind: first and foremost the propaganda; then to help *Freedom*. You have all seen by the last two numbers of *Freedom* last year, and also by a good many others, how difficult it is for *Freedom* to come out regularly and full size every month. Now I think that if *Freedom* could be sold out every month there would not be any more difficulties over its publication. For it stands to reason that if money is expended for paper, for labor, for postage etc., the same not being returned from its sale, it must fall into debt and consequently be reduced in size or be irregular in publication. But I think that if every one of our comrades would have a little more interest in the movement it would not only be possible to bring out *Freedom* full size, but we would also be able to have another weekly paper as well.

There are many ways and means of widening our movement. I think that if such a group be formed and say 300 copies of *Freedom* distributed every month in different parts of London, as well as all sorts of other literature, the results would be worth the trouble. However it might be, I think every comrade is able to spare say 2d. a week, if in work, and those who can afford 3d. will not be denied the liberty of doing so. Will every one interested in my proposition kindly communicate with me at the *Freedom* office, with a view to arranging a meeting for the fuller discussion and organisation of this important matter.

J. MULLER.

THE PROPAGANDA.

Canning Town Group meets every second Thursday in the month.

LIVERPOOL.

Winter, as a rule is the bane of Anarchist propaganda, more so when a group has no club room. The Liverpool Group have no club room, yet this winter has been anything but a winter of discontent so far as such a phrase may apply to the Anarchist movement. We seem to be the only section of progressive thought which is making any headway here. The I.L.P., which at one time appeared to be the coming force in Liverpool, is seldom heard of now. The S.D.F., although not asleep, are the victims of misfortune and at present have not the opportunity or their old-time energy to give any prominence to their ideas. Yet we, the Anarchist Communists, being weaker in members, money, and having no club room hold our usual meetings, have good sales of literature and, best of all, find that others are becoming Anarchist Communists. The favorable outlook is one which we have not experienced in summer, to say nothing of the other dreary winters, and all this with one who, although a speaker, is no lecturer. Upon the surface this may seem to be nothing uncommon; but when it is remembered that Liverpool-on-the-Slush is one of the most retrogressive cities of this Most Glorious Empire, one can understand that we do not exaggerate when we say that we are progressing. "THE PARADOX."

LEEDS.

Since our last report we have been busy. Our weekly group meetings at the Central Club have been well attended, some 26 to 30 comrades usually present. Several discussions have been held, notably with the Brotherhood Group; Kenworthy, Ferriss and Eliza Picard being specially prominent. In spite of wintry weather, our outdoor meetings at Vicar's Croft have been kept up, Drake and MacQueen being the usual speakers; collections have been taken and a fair quantity of literature sold.

MacQueen has lectured in Yeadon, near Leeds, twice, on "Socialism, Communism and Anarchism" and on "Anarchy and its methods." Good discussions resulted and several local men supported the new ideas. W. F. Barnard has been with us and lectured in the Central Club and in Vicar's Croft. All comrades were well pleased with him; other groups would do well to engage him.

Our printing group goes on well; of course, we are only amateurs, but will improve; anyway, it finds comrades a means of active work that otherwise they could not get. We expect big things of it. We have been hard at work during the past three months and are glad that our work has had some very good effect.

Our plans for the coming season include vigorous outdoor propaganda, sale of literature and distribution of our own leaflets—in fact, if our dreams and our energies only come to something, we shall have a Social Revolution all "on our own."

FREE COMMUNE GROUP.

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Donations Publication Fund.—Glasgow 5s., Humanitarian 5s., R. 7/6, per W. 8d.
Annual Subscriptions.—A. C. 1/6, Hartshorn 1/3, Russel 1/6, Muller 2s., M. 1/6-
Sales of FREEDOM.—Chen 2/8, Newsagents 4/4, May 4s., Warwick 4s., Leeds 2/4, Cart. 1s., Office 1/1.
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- BIBLIOGRAPHIE DE L'ANARCHIE par M. NETTLAU. Preface d' ELYSEE RECLUS; Brussels, 51 rue des Eperonniers, 1897; 294 pp. 5 francs; post free for 4 shillings prepaid.
- DIRECT ACTION VERSUS LEGISLATION, a new pamphlet by J. Blair Smith. Price one penny.

THE TRUTHSEEKER, A MONTHLY JOURNAL OF EGOISTIC SECULARISM. Price one penny. Publisher, J. W. GOTT, the great clothier, 2 Union Street, Bradford. Malfew Wilkes, 87 St. Ann's Well Road, Nottingham, will forward both these journals, post free, for 2½d.

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LUCIFER. An exponent of Anarchism in sexual relationships. Price single copy, 1d.; one year, 6s., direct post paid. Edited and published by Moses Harman, Chicago, U. S. A. English agent: Henry Seymour, 51 Arundel Square, London, N.

THE LIBERTARIAN LECTURE SOCIETY,

Lecturers for February are:

- Feb. 12. J. Turner, 'Broken Pillars of Social Democracy.'
- Feb. 19. J. T. Grein (Consul of the Congo State), 'If I were a Candidate.'
- Feb. 26. L. Withington, 'The Spoils of Empire.'

The Commune of Paris. The 28th anniversary meeting will be held on Friday March 17, in SHOREDITCH TOWN HALL, Old Street, E.C.

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