

Freedom

C.I.R.A.

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

VIVE LA COMMUNE!

AN INTERNATIONAL

PUBLIC MEETING

will be held on

FRIDAY, MARCH 17,

at the

Shoreditch Town Hall,

Old Street E.C. (close to Shoreditch Station, N.L.R.; trams from Bloomsbury and Moorgate Street, omnibuses from Charing Cross, Elephant, Bank, and Stamford Hill),

To Commemorate the 28th Anniversary of
THE PARIS COMMUNE, 1871.

SPEAKERS: P. Kropotkin, Louise Michel, J. Turner, F. Kitz, Lothrop Withington, W. Wess, Nellie Shaw, W. Tcherkesov, J. Marechal (Revolutionist of 1848 and 1871), W. Werner, Tarrida del Marmol, J. Kaplan, T. Rean, R. Rocker, etc.

The following Revolutionary songs will be sung during the evening:
"All for the Cause," "Wearing of the Green," "Anne Laurie," "No Master."

Doors open at 7.30 p.m.

Come in your thousands to commemorate this attempt of the brave French workers to manage their own affairs, for which 30,000 were afterwards slaughtered by the Government; and to protest against the present exploitation of man by man.

ADMISSION FREE.

ALL ARE WELCOME.

THE COMMUNE OF PARIS.

On the 18th of March, 1871, the world stood amazed at the spectacle of Paris, the second greatest city in Europe, crushed, one might have thought, by the most terrible siege known in modern history, rising in its true revolutionary spirit and declaring for the Commune. Even to-day the real importance of this great event is only realised by those who keep the revolutionary idea free from the influence of political chicanery and the mists of old-world prejudices. Many, even some of those who will be celebrating the Commune this month, will tell us it was a failure, and no doubt they will be right. But it was better to have tried and lost than never to have tried at all; and what, after all, we have to realise is the fact that the Commune was a necessity of the moment. *It had to be and it was.* What was unnecessary, what was monstrous, what was beyond all description black and inhuman was its "suppression" in the blood of 30,000 men and women, the flower of the citizens of Paris. And since we are speaking of failures, let it not be forgotten that the "suppression" besides being a great crime was also a great failure; for from that day to this the idea of the

Commune has spread and has taken, if possible, a firmer hold of the minds of those already convinced that the present society must give way to a higher form of social and industrial organisation. Not only that. If events in the near future should arise once more, stronger for the past experience, with clearer ideas and aims more sure. For the intervening years have at least taught us this: that man now needs to organise his life-conditions on freer bases than in the past, and that, to accomplish this, initiative must have free play. Centralisation and officialism are becoming daily more discredited, and the world is face to face with the fact that government, so far as the hopes and aspirations of the workers for a better life are concerned, is a failure. Hence the libertarian ideas which the Anarchist propaganda has encouraged in many minds, especially in France, will have had some share in forming the commune of the future when the time comes.

It is clear that however one may estimate the value of the Commune of '71 as an example to be followed, to the martyrs who died for that grand ideal we owe a great debt. That debt can only be repaid by us in carrying on the work which will eventually realise that free and regenerated society for which they gave their lives. It is not the time to talk of failure when after twenty-eight years men and women gather in their thousands in all parts of the civilised world to celebrate what will yet prove to be one of the most important landmarks in the path of social evolution. Success, as the world understands it, does not weigh in the balance with those who struggle to hand down to posterity better conditions than those under which they have themselves existed. What little liberty we now have, what advances have been made in science, in art, in invention—all have been gained by the courage and devotion of men and women who, not thinking of success, have taken a step in advance only too often to meet with the fate of the martyr at the hands of the cowards who govern and oppress mankind.

Let us, then, remember the Commune in its best light, as something that helps us by its very faults to a clearer estimate of the future, and inspires us with the hope that when again its voice is heard it will prove a reality that has come to stay.

Fellow citizens, join us in celebrating this noble attempt of the brave people of Paris to organise their social life on a basis of justice and equality. You who are at this moment threatened in your own city of London with the reactionary measures of base and sordid politicians; you, fellow workers should be the first to protest against the crimes of capitalism, and the loudest in your praise of that grand effort in the cause of Humanity—THE COMMUNE OF PARIS.

"JUSTICE" IN HOLLAND.

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

It was already the author of the *Proverbs* who said: "Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul, when he is hungry (vi., 20).

Did not Jesus say: "Have ye not read what David did when he was a hungred and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?" (Matt. xii., 3, 4)? So Jesus says that when a man is hungry, there exists no law for him; as Cardinal Manning expressed the same idea: "All human laws must yield to the natural right of life;" or the same as we find in the words of Goethe: "The law is powerful, but more powerful is necessity;" or the same as you have it in your proverb: "*Necessity knows no law.*" For these there is a law of Nature which is superior to all other laws, and that is the law of life.

Did not Luther, who is honored and respected, statues having been erected for him, speak the bold word: "Necessity breaks iron and can also break a law; what is wrong when there is no necessity, is justified when there is necessity. Who takes away a loaf from the baker's shop without being hungry, he is a thief; but if he does the same when he is hungry, he is right, for they ought to have given it him."? Did not Frederick II. of Prussia, "Old Fred," one day write to D'Alembert: "If there were a family, destitute of all, and living in the abominable

condition you describe, I should not hesitate to decide that theft becomes lawful"? And after a sentence of two tribunals in France, wherein a woman who had taken a loaf was acquitted, the following question was addressed to the society of Paris barristers: "Can hunger when compelling a person to appropriate victuals be called *force majeure* (main force, supreme necessity) attended to in Art. 64 of the Penal Law?" and the answer was affirmative. We are therefore in respectable company if we accept and proclaim the right of the so-called theft. We proclaim that it is not theft when a person takes what he wants for his support, even though all the laws forbid it. "He who does not work, shall not eat;"—granted, but then persons who are willing to work must be able to eat, and otherwise everybody who denies him this or who hinders him from doing so is the real thief. I say more: he who neglects to help himself is guilty of murder against his wife and family, who are languishing in a society with plenty for all. Do you know who are the real thieves? All those who keep from you workers the things you want.

We Socialists teach that the earth and all that is under and all that is on the surface belong to all men together. But then a part of the earth belongs to that part of the human race who are in want of it. And for that same reason everybody can claim so much of the earth as he wants for his support. Everyone who takes his part takes only that which he had a right to claim.

With such theories we do not see the guilt of these three men; even if they had done what they have been charged with doing. In that case they took what society ought to have given them.

But they were not even guilty of that offence. Appearing before the tribunal of class justice, sentence could not be otherwise. Socialism was on trial; and, as it would not do to directly oppose Socialism, the Socialists were first stigmatised as thieves and burglars and afterwards condemned.

It seems that the Minister of Justice himself is not quite at ease about the result of a revision of the sentence; for when he asks, "what would be gained if the case had been referred to the tribunal?" he replies himself: "in that case the doubts would have increased." So he admits that the doubts would not have been removed, but, on the contrary, would have increased. He who loves truth does not fear doubt nor criticism; but he who will not be convinced of error rails at doubt and criticism. But here the old proverb is applicable: *errare humanum est, nunquam errare divinum, perseverare in errare diabolicum* (to err is human, not to err divine, to persist in error devilish).

The question is put from time to time: for what reason would justice be so partial in its judgment? My answer is: we live in a state of classes, there we have a class judiciary, and such judges, of course, will administer justice in favor of the class to which they belong. Now, Socialism is an imminent danger to the class-state because it aims at the abolition of that state; and that is the reason why Socialism is to be quelled by any means whatever. That one judge commits an error is not strange, but that one, two, three courts should make a mistake, that is very strange—if there is no particular reason for it.

A story is told of Napoleon I., that he sent for the President of the Supreme Court, when that Court had committed an error, in order to call him to account for this fact; whereupon the latter said, "Your Majesty, the best horse stumbles from time to time." Napoleon's reply was: "No doubt one horse can stumble, but not a whole stable at the same time." No, those judges together punish here, while they would set a warning example in order to arrest Socialism in its triumphant course, and it is therefore that these three brothers have been punished so severely, so barbarously.

We found the following in a French play which may be called apposite to the case:

A constable brings a criminal, who is charged with murder, before the judge. Triumphant—for a constable is always glad when he has laid hands on some one—he says: "Your worship, here is the man who murdered Barbara."

Judge.—That man shall be hanged; how did he do it? (You see that the sentence is given first and afterwards an inquiry is made into the matter.)

Constable.—He cut her into small pieces and pickled her.

Judge.—He has done wrong. He shall be hanged.

Lothario.—Your worship, I have not murdered Barbara. On the contrary I've fed her and clothed her and taken care of her. There are witnesses who will declare that I am a kind man and not a murderer.

Judge.—Man, you shall be hanged. You aggravate your crime by self-conceit. It is not for a man who—who has been charged with something to think he is a kind man.

Lothario.—But, your worship, there are witnesses who will confirm this. And as I am charged with murder—

Judge.—You shall be hanged. In the first place, you have cut Barbara into pieces. In the second place, you pickled her. And, in the third place, you are self-conceited. Three capital crimes—Who are you, woman?

Woman.—I am Barbara.

Lothario.—Thank God! Your worship, you see that I've not murdered her, that I've not cut her into pieces.

Judge.—Ahem, ahem! yes, ahem, I see! But the pickling?

Barbara.—No, your worship, he has not pickled me. On the contrary, he has been very kind to me. He is a noble man.

Judge.—Ahem, ahem! but the third point, the conceitedness, remains. Constable, carry that man off, he shall be hanged. He is guilty of self-conceit.

Exactly in the same way was it with our case. The brothers Hogerhuis must be found guilty and they were found guilty. The sentence was ready before an inquiry was made into the matter. The condemnation must follow at any cost, and they are condemned.

A great agitation of the people was the consequence, and at last one of the members of the Second Chamber was urged by it to interpellate the Minister of Justice. The latter spoke superciliously of "the agitation of the people, which he will know how to oppose," of "persons, perfectly ignorant of the matter," and more such fine things. Though he said in a private conversation with one of my friends: "I don't know whether they (the brothers Hogerhuis) are guilty."—A minister who professes not to know whether three men are guilty or not! And also he said: "I should rather say innocent than guilty."

However, he promised a new inquiry, especially after the chief witness, Gatsé Haitsma, had been accused of perjury. Besides, three other persons were pointed out to be the real burglars. I myself have disapproved of this from the beginning; for we cannot make it our task to point out culprits—we have our justice for that, who is paid for it, and it is not in our way to render service as detectives to the justice or the police—but it is our task to rescue innocent people. It would be a very strange administration of justice indeed to refuse the release of innocent men so long as there are no substitutes for them. This would be according to the principle: some one must be committed to prison—if it be not the right one, no matter, in that case we take another; but justice is not satisfied if there is no one in prison.

Indeed, I say that they cannot be sure that they know the right ones; but why not let them try to give the proofs?

Suppose these persons who are suspected of having committed the burglary really did do it, have we not then the same objections against the correctness of the sentence? It is my contention that the same objections to the possibility of recognition at 75 metres distance, to the possibility of jumping in long clothes through a window like we have seen, of recognition when the persons wear masks or by uncommon movements or by habits which do not exist, are applicable to the three newly accused men as well as to the brothers Hogerhuis. No, the sentence is not right and therefore a revisal of the lawsuit must be the demand. And everybody can subscribe to this, those who are convinced of their guilt as well as those who are convinced of their innocence. But no revisal by the same persons, as they have done now; not by an examination with closed doors, because in that case the public cannot control. Nor by such persons as feel they will be blamed if the result is in favor of the three innocent men. Nay, it is even dangerous to refer the case to another court of justice, there being a sort of *coterie* among judges, especially in matters influenced by the class point of view, and it is a popular saying: hawks do not pick out hawks' eyes.

Now, the revisal of a sentence is impossible if there is no other motive but doubt. There are three cases in which a revisal is possible: 1. if one or more than one accused persons have been condemned by different sentences as committers of the same indictable act, and if those sentences do not square but show the innocence of some one or other of the accused; 2. if the man who was said to be murdered, on account of which another has been punished, suddenly appears and says: I'm not murdered, I live, here am I; 3. if after the condemnation of an accused person, no matter for what indictable act, one or more witnesses for the prosecution are prosecuted on account of perjury in that lawsuit.

Justice, in all countries, is a remnant of the arbitrariness of the Middle Ages; in the same way, the robes of their workshops make us imagine we are entering a theatre when we are present at the session of a tribunal. The dignity of a great number of these gentlemen is, indeed, to be found only in their clothes; and against the administration many an attack will be necessary before it really may be called justice.

Some good has been derived already from the agitation of the people; for it has urged a few members of the Second Chamber to present a Bill in consequence of which the revisal of a sentence will be possible in the future; and if the Chamber will pass this Bill, we are getting ahead. And if they make it retrospective in order to apply it to the case of the brothers Hogerhuis we should have a revisal by that way. In this way we hope to advance, though slowly. Agitating, incessantly agitating, that's the thing wanted. The governments follow the method of the Roman general Fabius Cunctator by harassing the enemy incessantly. They think: oh! the agitation of the people will decline after some time. The attention of the people cannot be drawn too long to the same point. New cases arise and the old are replaced, we live so quickly. The meetings will become less attractive and when the people do not go there any longer the agitators will be wearied of always harping on the same string, and the case is soon forgotten. The government speculates on the lethargy of the people, beginning something with energy, but not having that tenacity of purpose and that inexhaustible patience required to carry a thing through. We shall, however, not forget the striking story that we find in St. Luke, xviii, 2-6, where is said: "There was in a city a judge, who feared not God, neither regarded man; and there was a widow in that city, and she came unto him saying: avenge me of mine adversary."

"And he would not for a while; but afterwards he said within himself: though I fear not God, nor regard man;

"Yet, because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."

"And the Lord said: Hear what the unjust judge saith."

It is just the same with our agitation, and by continual coming the judges weary and avenge us.

We are of the same opinion as a well-known professor, who said: "It is better that ten guilty persons walk about at liberty than that one innocent man should be in prison."

And in our case there is not one, but there are three innocent men in prison to pine away for six, eleven and twelve years behind the thick walls and to be murdered mentally if not bodily.

Then, on the eve of the twentieth century, humanity has made such progress that persons who commit offences against legal order—an order constituted without their approbation and against their interests—are kept from doing harm by locking them up in small stone dungeons where daylight can hardly find its way. When I read in the newspapers that, in the free Swiss Republic, Luccheni, who stabbed the Empress of Austria, has been committed to jail for life, and I see further on that he is to pass the first six months in a subterranean dungeon without any light, that he will be allowed only once a fortnight to leave the dungeon for one hour, that during that time he will be kept on bread and water twice a week and that on the other days will be provided with the ordinary prison food—when I read that, I asked myself if the deed committed against him by our civilised, so-called Christian society is not ten times more horrible and cruel than the deed committed by Luccheni against that Empress. O, people are so humane, and from mere humanity in Holland and elsewhere the penalty of death is abolished; but what signifies the capital punishment, a torture of a few minutes, in comparison with the cellular imprisonment, a long torture from day to day, from hour to hour, from minute to minute? The principle of revenge is still the basis of our penal law, and therefore when acts are committed that disturb the present legal order society takes revenge on those who have fallen into its clutches.

You will understand that the Socialists have good reason to object to the sentence on the brothers Hogerhuis, and you will also understand the reason why the bourgeoisie is so indifferent in this matter. It is an instinctive love of self-preservation by which they are prompted. Every attack upon the sacro-sacred property of the possessing class must be revenged with severity. Why should they oppose the verdict of such a tribunal? For the sake of justice?

But there is reason to fear that all working people will feel strengthened in their distrust of justice. It is better, they think, that these three men are in prison innocent, than that this distrust should increase. And though their feeling of justice is wounded, it is better to keep silent than to support the Socialists in their work, to undermine the judiciary.

The efforts to obtain a revision of this sentence are not specially Socialist; but the bourgeoisie has this idea of the matter to such a degree that, of that class, only a very small number have courage enough to acknowledge that justice committed a fault. The mighty lever of class-hatred in so many persons rouses antipathy to these men and blinds them in such a manner that they are not able to judge impartially.

And, though it is true what the poet sang:

Stone walls do not a prison make
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a hermitage,

yet the thought afflicts us sorely that three young men in the prime of life have been torn away from the heart of an old mother of seventy years, from their work, from society, to fall victims—innocent victims—to the hatred the bourgeoisie cherish against Socialism.

I hope that the powerful voice of Albion's sons may join the chorus of humanity and justice, so that also from this side of the sea a loud protest is heard against the injustice committed and in favor of revision.

No doubt, the affair of Dreyfus was much taken to heart. He was an officer, a millionaire, the inhabitant of a large country, three circumstances which explain why the press of the possessing class took to him so kindly. The brothers Hogerhuis, on the contrary, are workers, poor men and live in a small almost unknown corner of the world. That's why it is so much more difficult to rouse the necessary sympathy for them in other persons who have never heard of their case. Nevertheless I have made an effort to do so by drawing your attention to it, and I hope I have not asked too much of your patience; I thank you very much for your indulgence. What I request is not that you will rely on my words alone and proclaim the innocence of the three men; no, I agree that, advised only by me, you would perhaps be prepossessed; but I request you, in the doubt that exists and that lives in the hearts of thousands, to demand with us: revision of the sentence. Doing so, you fulfil the duty of humanity by assisting us in restoring these three young men to their family, to society, to liberty. And when we shake their hands in liberty, we shall tell them that you in England have assisted by your voice to liberate them. DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS.

RAGS.

The air of the car was blue with smoke. Above the hum of conversation, a voice in the rear end of the car was raised in protest.

Conversation ceased and everyone turned expectant faces to the rear of the car.

"Can't do anything for you. You'll have to get off at the next station."

The grey eyes looked out across the Dakota prairie, and the lines about the mouth tightened. The conductor passed into the next car. The passengers looked curiously at the man sitting so quietly in the seat. Had his clothes been all there was to speak for him, the verdict would certainly have been adverse. But there was a look of determination about the mouth, and a defiance in the eyes that looked so quietly out into

the bitter cold of the December twilight, that spoke in his favor. He was young and looked strong. His face and hands had that shiny grime that is a combination of car-oil and coal-dust. His outer coat had no buttons, and was pinned at the throat and tied around the middle with a rope.

The train whistled for a station. There was the usual tendency among the passengers to fall over the forward seats, as the brakes ground and the train stopped.

Some watched the man whom the conductor had said was to get off there. Others looked for the station. There it was. A water tank and tool box. Not another house in sight. Miles and miles in every direction was the Dakota prairie, and the gray December twilight over it all.

The door opened and the conductor came in, followed by his two assistants, leaving the door open.

"Come, you'll have to get off here, young feller."

The grey eyes turned toward the open door, but the man never moved.

Then Brass-Buttons and the Blue-Coats approached Rags gingerly, and laid a hand upon his shoulder. This was the signal for a general assault. One grabbed an arm, another a leg and the third his coat collar. Directly they were struggling on the floor, with arms and legs, and hands and feet. Now Rags was under, then Brass-Buttons was under and then both went under together.

Eager faces crowded about. Passengers from the other car gazed over each other's shoulders through the open door. But the scene is closing now. They had him at the door. He seemed to have given up the struggle. Down the steps they drag him; off onto the ground. There you are, Rags. May the Dakota winds speak gently to you; and the winter's night close softly down upon you. The thrice frozen ground at your feet you will not find harder than the hearts of men.

The conductor's watch chain is in four, one cuff-link is gone and blood is on his under-lip. One of the assistants walks lame and the sleeve is torn entirely out of the coat of the other; but—"the country was saved." The man was put off.

The next day the following appeared in the *Minot Courier*:

"TRAMP FROZEN.

"Last night, just before midnight, as No. 14, east-bound, was getting into S—, six miles west of here, the engineer discovered the form of a man lying in the middle of the track. He immediately reversed all steam and put on brakes, but was unable to stop before he had struck the body. The remains were badly frozen, and it is impossible to say whether he was alive when the engine struck him. The remains will be taken to Grand Forks for interment."

And so Rags got his ride after all.—*Prison Mirror*.

WEST HAM NOTES.

During February we have had Mr. A. F. Hills, who owns the Thames Ironworks' shipbuilding yard in this neighbourhood, telling the people the advantages of the eight-hour day and his Goodfellowship Scheme of which the following is a report from the capitalist press:

"Since the adoption of shorter hours the Thames Ironworks Company has spent over £100,000 on labor-saving plant, and it had fully organised a Goodfellowship Scheme. Under this scheme the various groups of men, platers, rivetters, shipwrights, boilermakers, contracted to do a given job at a certain fixed price. They were paid the regulation trade union rate of wages, and if they succeeded in getting a job done for less than the stipulated sum, the balance in the men's favor was divided amongst them. So keen, indeed, were the men in entering into the spirit of the thing that they had been known to petition for the dismissal of lazy or incompetent hands, whose retention would have interfered with their chances of a dividend. From the table they would see that under this Goodfellowship Scheme the men had earned by way of bonus since the institution of the scheme in 1892 a total of £42,519. This form of profit-sharing, he might say, involved the most elaborate bookkeeping arrangements, and this has given the firm the unexpected advantage of knowing more exactly what everything cost than any other firm in the Kingdom."

But Mr. Hills has not told us how the workers in a good many instances have turned out as much as three times the work done previous to the bonus scheme, and when they have not done so have been told: "You're in debt this month." Nor does he mention the fact that as competition rules the market in shipbuilding as in other trades, it is impossible to compete with firms on the Clyde and the Tyne where coal and iron are at hand, seeing there is freightage to be paid on coal, iron and steel coming from the north, unless the workers are driven like niggers so as to be able to "hold their own." Then we are told the men are so keen in "entering into the spirit of the thing that they petition for the dismissal of lazy or incompetent hands"! What a splendid example for the workers to copy. What a lesson for you who are continually singing, "Rule Britannia, Britons never shall be slaves!" etc.

Now, Mr. Hills, don't you think the "hands," as you call them, will soon see that as they do as much work in six months as they previously did in twelve, they are doing themselves out of that amount of wages—except a little bonus that you throw to them—and they will revert back to the old order or else other firms will copy your example and, being better situated, will make some of the blockheads see what we, the Anarchists, have already seen: that to continually waste time over useless labor in manufacturing engines and ships of destruction is madness; and will turn their energies to producing something useful—and own it after making it. Thus you and your class of idlers will have become things of the past.

R. PEDDIE.

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The Editors are not necessarily in agreement with signed articles.

NOTES.

SOLVING SOCIAL PROBLEMS.

"A somewhat novel step has been taken by the Wandsworth and Clapham Union. Bills are being posted in which the guardians offer a free pardon to parents who have deserted their children, provided they claim them before March 31 next. There are upwards of 200 of such children, and the guardians hope that by taking this course the parents will avail themselves of the opportunity to claim their children without the risk of imprisonment for desertion." *Daily Telegraph*, Feb. 10.

These guardians, no doubt, are good Christians, but they have conveniently forgotten the teaching of him who said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," and the fact that these poor little souls are for all practical purposes simply orphans only makes them the more anxious to get them off their hands. Do these guardians, I wonder, ever stop to consider what causes are at the bottom of these unnatural desertions? Here and there may be found a mother whose maternal instincts are so feebly developed that the fate of her children is almost a matter of indifference to her; but that does not amount to one in ten thousand. It is, however, quite certain that in the overwhelming majority of cases these desertions have cost the mothers many bitter pangs. Why, then, has it been done? For the simple reason that the mothers understood, and rightly understood, hard as is the fate of a pauper child (thanks to these same guardians) it is better than the fate that falls to the children of those unhappy women who sleep unsheltered in the streets of this, the richest city in the world. Do the guardians ever pause to consider the causes of such inhuman conditions? Not they. They are for law and order—and when ever did that care for the sacredness of human life.

J. MULLER

A FOREST OF DIFFICULTIES.

The man who works to reform existing evils, if he is sincere, must be the most optimistic individual under the sun. Take the housing problem, for example. Seeing that the barracks called model dwellings have done nothing toward solving the question, but, on the contrary, have brought fresh evils in their train, what could be better than to distribute our seething population in the suburbs of London? The jerry builder at any rate can see money in it, and forthwith commences those long, dreary rows of bricks and mud which, in the eastern suburbs at least, seem to contain a population that has left the last gleam of cheerfulness behind. But again arises a difficulty: if the people are to be got out of the city they must have cheap fares. Well, we must have workmen's trains, and the reformer is immediately met with the problem of the railway monopoly. Nothing daunted, he agitates again and again, and the railway companies run a few trains at unearthly hours crowded with workers as they would not be allowed to crowd cattle, and the scandal becomes so great that numbers would sooner endure the evils of town life. So the housing problem is still with us in a more aggravated form; and the work of the reformer seems ever to be neutralised by the inherent evils of our present social organisation. We point this out because, however much courage and patience it requires to work for Anarchism, there cannot be as much disappointment for us as there must be for the "reformer."

THE "FREE PRESS" IN ITALY.

Emily Spender, writing to the *Chronicle* of March 2, gives the words of Carlo Romussi (suffering four years imprisonment for his political opinions) spoken to an Italian deputy who visited him in prison. His attitude is so worthy of our admiration that we quote in full:

If it is true that the Ministry are trying to make a bargain, refusing an amnesty for the political prisoners unless the Chambers vote the proposed laws for destroying the freedom of the Press, then I say distinctly that I will be no party to such a

bargain. If any deputies seek to excuse themselves for voting for these laws by a pretext of compassion for us, I reject all compassion which is founded on an injury to public rights. The galleys for us a thousand times, rather than diminish the liberty of the Press, already too limited in Italy. I hear with pleasure that the Association of Journalists does not intend to make any treaty with this new despotism. Imprisonment is painful, especially for the innocent; but these proposed laws threaten with imprisonment all journalists who do not please the Government, render impossible any control over public men and deliver us over, bound hand and foot, to the political faction in power. In order to condemn us they have suspended the Constitution and proclaimed a state of siege. With these laws we shall have the state of siege in permanence. Carry on the agitation with all your might without regarding what becomes of us.

THE "EIGHT-HOUR DAY" IN TUNNELS!

Read the following announcement and then tell us if we are not a progressive nation:

EIGHT HOURS IN TUNNELS.

At the suggestion of the Board of Trade forty-seven railway companies have decided that no flagman or watchman in their employ shall remain on duty in a tunnel for longer than eight hours.

Only eight hours in the inferno of a railway tunnel with the cheerful prospect of being cut in two if the foul air, the smoke and the steam should make you feel dazed. Truly the railway director is a merciful animal! Still, we would like one question answered: How many hours would be deemed sufficient if the directors had to do the work?

We have received the following from Dr. Merlino:

Rome, February 12, 1899.

DEAR FRIENDS,—I wish to thank Tcherkesov for the good remembrance he has of me, yet, at the same time, to say that I do not believe "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 are creating the customs, life and progress of the nation." I do not remember having written anything of the kind in *Formes et essence du Socialisme*. I wrote there that the principles of justice which constitute the essence of Socialism, have to be embodied and reflected in some practical institutions, agreements, regulations, etc.; in this sense, but in this sense only, the social question is a juridical one—not that laws create... men and nations.

I take this opportunity to send greetings to all London friends, and remain

Yours sincerely

S. MERLINO.

THE INTERNATIONAL,

ITS PRECURSORS, AND ANARCHISM.

IV.

English Socialism; W. Godwin, R. Owen.

Socialism and the working class movement in England date from the time of Babeuf's conspiracy. Communist ideas of various religious sects, popular claims at the time of the Reformation, works like Sir Thomas More's *Utopia*, had sown many a germ in the national conscience, and we find in many English authors of the 17th and 18th centuries traces of libertarian and humanitarian aspirations. But the work that had the greatest influence in forming the conception of modern Socialism was Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.

It is a remarkable fact that Adam Smith was neither a Communist of Sir Thomas More's type nor a Socialist like those of to-day. Neither did he rouse interest in the social question in England as a practical reformer. A sincere friend of the people and desirous of their well-being, he was nevertheless far removed from what are called "subversive" ideas. As a philosopher and searcher after truth, he demonstrated that "work is the true measure of value," that it is work that creates all wealth and that all those gentlemen, kings, ministers, priests, etc., in spite of their "honorable functions" are non-productive. Further on he showed that the smaller the number of these "honorable" men in a given society, the more would that society prosper.

It was certainly Adam Smith who discovered these fundamental truths of social life. Since the beginning of history, the people had said that their flesh was eaten and their blood was sucked by these "honorable" men. But these honorable parasites suppressed popular philosophy, and would also have gladly suppressed Adam Smith's statement; but the father of political economy expressed himself in such moderate terms and with so much good nature that they did not dare contradict him too much. And then, neither the author nor his disciples put these abstract formulæ to practical or immediate use. It was the new generation imbued with these works of genius that tried to apply Adam Smith's laws to social life. Among these young authors the first place belongs to Godwin, who in his celebrated work, *Political Justice* (1795), spoke out boldly.

As it is work that creates all wealth, political justice, according to Godwin, obliges society to guarantee well-being to those who work and produce, to producers in general. Contrary to justice, the producer is deprived of the smallest political and social guarantee. He drags on a wretched existence, crushed by fifteen or sixteen hours' work. On the other hand, if the "honorable" of society are unproductive, what reason can justify their seizing and squandering riches produced by half-starved men? What right would they have to exist in a society

based on real justice? Godwin, a man of great moral courage and a very logical thinker, was not long before he indicated the real causes of poverty and the efficacious remedies to make justice triumph in social relations. His humane criticism of all religious, social and political prejudices and institutions is implacable. He denies the religious and moral superstitions of capitalist society, as well as those of authoritarian political organisations. His ideal is an autonomous society, an absence of all governmental regulation, and individuals free in their individual and social relations. The history of his time testifies to the great influence exercised by Godwin on young men and workers. His ideas inspired, among others, the greatest lyric poet of modern times, Percy Shelley, who, atheist and revolutionist, defied English conventionality and lived for years in free union with Mary Godwin, the philosopher's daughter.

Not less was the influence of the writings and memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft, the noble and gifted wife of the philosopher, upon Shelley. I give here her moral and literary character in the words of the *Daily Chronicle's* reviewer, who certainly is no revolutionist nor Anarchist:

"Eighty years ago, on the morrow of the French Revolution, Shelley pictured Cythna in *The Revolt of Islam* as the leader of a new crusade.

'The wild-eyed women throng around her path;

From their luxurious dungeons, from the dust
Of meaner thralls, from the oppressor's wrath,
Or the caresses of his sated lust,

They congregate; in her they put their trust . . .

Thus she doth equal laws and justice teach

To women outraged and polluted long.'

.....She was Mary Wollstonecraft, the mother of Mary Godwin, who was the second wife of Shelley. The poet never knew her, but he knew what she had done and written: how, after a youth of misery, and effort, and championship, she had imbibed from Rousseau and Paine and their brother revolutionists all the formative ideas of the new departure of humanity, and with her quick, strong woman's wit had produced out of a full heart—produced in six weeks, at the rate of about 20,000 words a week—her *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. The object of the book, to put it into a few words, was to claim 'justice for one half of the human race,' equality in education and equality in civil rights, independence both in mind and in person, so that girls should no longer be trained from their infancy as though their highest virtue were, as even Rousseau had contended, to be useful and convenient for men.....It made her extremely unpopular, which means little more than that she was far ahead of the time in which she lived.....She was unquestionably the pioneer of the emancipation of her sex.....

....."In her life and writings, in her conduct and aims, she stood unmistakably on a very high level; but she defied the lightning and was struck by it.....She lived with Imlay as his wife, in the very exaltation of personal purity, and, when he deserted her, she flung her body into the Thames. After that she lived with Godwin as his wife; but they took pity on their unborn offspring, and Mary Godwin was the child of a legal wedlock. These two acts of wilfulness enabled the man in the street to point the finger of scorn at an essentially wise and noble woman."¹

Shelley's revolutionary ideas and sympathy for the poor and the oppressed are reflected in Byron's poetry. Lord Byron, who, in the House of Lords in 1812, uttered this accusation: "I have traversed the seat of war in the Peninsula (Spain), I have even seen some of the most oppressed of Turkish provinces; but never have I beheld such squalid wretchedness as I have seen...in the heart of a Christian country" (England). It needed great moral and civic courage for Godwin, his wife and his friends to break off so absolutely with convention in England, at a time of reaction. Godwin was brave; but his action did not go beyond literary and ethical circles. The man who first acted as agitator and Socialist organiser among the "creators of wealth," was also one of Godwin's disciples, Robert Owen, justly considered the founder of the Communist, modern Trade Unionist and Co-operative movements, the initiator of labor legislation, of compulsory democratic secular education.

Before sketching Robert Owen's life (1771-1858) and his long career as an agitator, I shall try to give an idea of the economic and social conditions of the working classes in England and of the black poverty which so roused Lord Byron.

W. TCHERKESOV.

THE ANTI-ANARCHIST CONFERENCE.

The Anti-Anarchist Conference with its resolutions is a piece of governmental bluster designed to terrify timid comrades. Its utility for repressing acts of violence is *nil*. Anarchists who feel called to practise "the propaganda of deeds" are not of the stuff which is terrorised by laws or policemen, and as they for obvious reasons do not make their personality conspicuous nor even let their opinions be known, the devices for "registration," "international bureaux," etc., simply mean more money wasted on more parasites doing sham work as clerks, detectives, etc.

So far as our literary propaganda is concerned, that is absolutely extinguisable, thanks to the art of printing and the ability to read of so large a portion of the European and American world. Our comrades engaged in that propaganda may expect to be worried: but, should it

¹ *A Study of Mary Wollstonecraft and "The Rights of Woman,"* by Emma Rauschenbusch-Clough, Ph. D., London 1898.

be prohibited, the secret press would at once come into action, the language employed would become bolder and more emphatic, and the pages thus issuing from unknown sources would be read with the eager appetite always evoked by forbidden fruit. We are not afraid of prohibition and are not at all sure but what it would greatly extend our propaganda by tempting even the indifferent to interest themselves in the study of forbidden truths.

One thing is certain—the threatening attitude of the combined governments will meet with defiance as its response, and our comrades will be aroused to greater activity, deeper devotion and still more steadfast perseverance in the Cause, the only Cause worth striving for, suffering for and dying for: the emancipation once and for all of the whole human race and the happiness of each individual.

Hurrah for Anarchy!

H. GLASSE.

MUTUAL AID versus CHARITY.

To those who have a poor opinion of the workers' good qualities, as well as to those honest but shortsighted people who believe in charity as a remedy for social distress we most heartily recommend the article by Jane Addams in the February number of the *Atlantic Monthly*. *The Subtle Problems of Charity*, is what Miss Addams calls her subject, and very interesting reading matter it is. Miss Jane Addams is a very honest and hardworking woman imbued with ideas of a Christian Socialist nature, who, with others of a kindred spirit, founded some years ago in Chicago a social settlement called The Hull House. The founders of this institution who, in addition to holding Christian Socialist ideas, wanted to do some practical work in alleviating the sufferings of the poor, settled in their midst; and while holding meetings and forming classes of men and women for the discussion of social subjects as well as sewing, singing and other classes, also tried a system of organised charity to assist and relieve the poor.

After ten years or more spent in this kind of work Miss Addams tells us of some of the difficulties to be met with in this business, and she calls them *The Subtle Problems of Charity*. Of the many problems that perplex the mind of the charity worker none stand out so clearly as the difference in ethical conceptions between the giver of charity and the recipient of it. The workers, on one hand, making heroic sacrifices to assist their neighbours do it without questioning or in any way humiliating the recipient; while the charity-giver doles out coals and beans, and with them a lot of questioning: first, as to whether they are entitled to them, and afterwards a long lecture on the crime of idleness and the glory of self-help. She gives us some instances of mutual aid among the workers, which, to us who are continually pointing out those good qualities in the masses, are especially refreshing. After telling of an Irish family where the man had lost his work and the woman is struggling to eke out a mere existence, will take in a widow and her five children who had been turned into the street, without a moment's reflection as to their own physical discomforts. Of a woman whom she had tried in vain to procure work for, and when at last she did succeed the woman failed to appear. Upon investigation it transpired that a neighbour had fallen ill and the woman had gone to nurse her, saying simply, when reasons for her not having come to work were demanded, "It broke me heart to leave the place; but what could I do?"

Miss Addams tells the following story that speaks for itself:

"Another woman, whose husband was sent up to the city prison for the maximum term just three months before the birth of her child, having gradually sold her supply of household furniture, found herself penniless. She sought refuge with a friend whom she supposed to be living in three rooms in another part of the town. When she arrived, however, she discovered that her friend's husband had been out of work so long that they had been reduced to living in one room. The friend at once took her in, and the friend's husband was obliged to sleep upon a bench in the park every night for a week; which he did uncomplainingly, if not cheerfully. Fortunately, it was summer, and it only rained one night." The writer (Miss Addams) could not discover from the young mother that she had any special claim upon the "friend," beyond the fact that they had formerly worked together in the same factory. The husband she had never seen until the night of her arrival when he at once went in search of a midwife who would consent to come upon his promise of future payment."

Compare the above with the charity worker, honest though she may be, who herself coming from the middle class where poverty means a limited income of, say, two or three hundred a year, and yet she is compelled by force of circumstances to ask humiliating questions before giving assistance and afterwards preach a sermon on thrift, temperance, etc., things which, Miss Addams points out, she has never adopted herself. She tells us how the poor learn to lie; because in order to receive assistance, they must pretend to believe in temperance, have fewer children and so on; arguments put forth by the relieving officer.

Stock arguments about independence are advocated by the charity officers and the worker is told that old story, "Every American man can find work and is bound to support his family." Miss Addams rightly says, "There is no use in talking independence to a man when he is going to stand in a row, hat in hand, before an office desk in the hope of getting a position."

She also gives an excellent answer to our middle class Malthusian friends who deprecate early marriages among the workers, by calling attention to the fact that whereas the business man's income is better at thirty-five than at twenty-five, the worker earns more between the ages of twenty and thirty than any other time and at thirty-five or

forty he is laid on the shelf, so he looks upon his children as his bank, they stimulate thrift in him and take care of him when he is old.

Of the many things in this article, perhaps the most touching is the case of the little Italian boy of six years, "whose goblin or bugaboo of the more fortunate child had come to be the need of coal, which caused his father hysterical and demonstrative grief when it carried off his mother's inherited linen, the mosaic of St. Joseph and, worst of all, his own rubber boots. He once came to a party at Hull House, and was interested in nothing save a gas stove in the kitchen. He became excited over the discovery that fire could be produced without fuel. 'I will tell my father of this stove. You buy no coal; you need only a match. Anybody will give you a match.' He was taken to visit at a country house and at once inquired how much rent was paid for it. On being told carelessly by the hostess that they paid no rent for that house, he came back quite wild with interest that the problem was solved. 'Me and my father will go to the country. You get a big house, all warm, without rent.' Nothing else in the country interested him but the question of rent, and he talked of that with an exclusiveness worthy of a Single Taxer."

Miss Addams makes one great mistake; she says that "the charitable Miss Octavia Hill has brought about the reform of the London tenement houses." She has only to read the series of articles that have appeared during the last two months in the *Daily News*, entitled *No Room to Live*, to find out that Octavia Hill has, if anything, added to the misery of the inhabitants of the London tenements instead of reforming them.

Yes, Miss Addams, you have rightly named your subject *The Subtle Problems of Charity*, and subtle they will remain until this accursed society, which makes Hull Houses a necessity, is destroyed root and branch, and organised charity, honest though its promoters may be, is relegated to the dark ages, where it justly belongs, and men and women are free to enjoy the fruits of their labor and lead happy and useful lives—when no longer will it be necessary for a Victor Hugo to cry out: "The Paradise of the rich is built upon the Hell of the poor."

[We gladly print the above but, at the same time we think it unnecessary to take too seriously those who so frequently indulge in denunciation of the worker for his follies or his vices. Whatever he may be, the fact remains that he is shamefully robbed and cruelly enslaved. Stop the robbery; end the slavery; and the virtues will take care of themselves.—Ed.]

WAR AND ITS EVILS.

Since the war mania, with its usual so-called patriotic phrases, is continually disturbing the mental equilibrium of different nationalities, I think one will not be acting prematurely in examining this horrible scourge, which is carried on by the privileged classes of the world. Certainly, from whatever aspect we may view it, it is barbarous in the extreme. This, no person with a humanitarian feeling can deny, and neither can it be assumed that it has in any way aided progress; but, on the contrary, it has retarded it. For the destruction of life and wealth must be detrimental to the well-being of mankind. We hear a deal of worthless claptrap in our time about "the extension of the empire" or the "acquisition of certain territories," as though these things would be beneficial to all. But, far from that, this extension of empires benefits those who are always whining for it—the privileged idlers. While the workers have to pay for it in the shape of prodigious taxation, bad times, dear food, etc. This Jingo spirit which has obtained such a firm hold in Europe of late years, has grown side by side with democratic ideas, nay, we even see Democrats supporting the war mania.

What has been the effect of this horrible carnage, this hatred which exists between nations, which has trampled under foot the eternal bonds of brotherhood which are latent in man? It has been the means of augmenting the misery and oppression already created by an unproductive and idle class, and the slaying of millions of human creatures; according to statistics, within the last fifty years 2,900,000 lives have been sacrificed by the worship of Mars, and this has cost the nations of Europe £3,480,000,000. This is murder with a vengeance, which only governments can accomplish. Why should this fearful sacrifice of human life take place? Can it be for the well-being of humanity? No! But for extending the dominions of the rich, to swell their already bulging coffers by opening up fresh fields for the exploits of the usurer, the merchant and manufacturer. It is this class who profit by war; while the poor have to bear all the burdens resulting from it.

The Christian with bank notes and broad acres, with a gloomy visage, may be heard reciting the commandment, "Thou shalt do no murder." What irony! Is the slaying of human beings of any consequence to him, when his interests are menaced? or when he is desirous of finding fresh markets for his goods which his workmen have produced for him? Greed and avarice obliterate the finer sentiments in man.

Such is the morality of the present day. It teaches that human life is to be respected; oh, yes! but, if the interests of the classes are in jeopardy, we see how soon the little regard there is displayed for human life will vanish. Europe to-day is nothing but an armed camp, where men, by the aid of the most cruel and loathsome devices, are trained in human butchery. There are something like 29,000,000 men maintained at the expense of the workers to carry on this detestable business. This costs the different nations £222,700,000 annually, which does not include the interest on debts incurred by war. This has all to be got from the toil of the worker; from what other source can it come?

Yet the workers never consider that they have to bear all the burdens; that they and their children have to starve because, as a consequence

of war, stagnation of trade ensues and those in possession of the wealth take a mean advantage of the condition thus created, by raising the prices of food and other things which the poor need. As an example, we may point to the late war between Spain and America, on which occasion wheat was concentrated into the hands of a few persons and sold at largely increased prices. This was the means of raising the price of bread in countries where American flour is used. Hence war gives monopolists an opportunity for raising the price of food stuffs, and these parasites are always ready to make use of it on the slightest pretext.

Then we have another important item to consider, namely, the huge debts that have been contracted by the different countries to carry on this inhuman and useless strife. In England, Christian England, the war debt amounts to about £650,000,000. The interest on this amount has to be paid by taxes levied on labor in various ways. Thus wars are an advantage to the privileged classes, because they increase their dividends and profits, and open up fresh channels for exploitation of the worker. And, if the workers grow discontented, rumours of war may have a hypnotising effect upon them, create idle expectations and divert their inquiry from the real cause of their poverty. One may often have heard it said, that "We only need a war to reduce the population and bring better times;" needless to say this is an absurd fallacy, but these facts show how those who fail to enquire for themselves are easily deceived. We hear a great deal of senseless talk at times, which is indulged in by equally senseless persons, respecting the humanity displayed by those nations which style themselves civilised. It would require a very powerful microscope to perceive any traces of this element, I think. Perhaps the mere fact of it being almost non-existent is the reason for its being so often advertised. We always point with a hypocritical air at any cruel acts committed by others; but let us learn to act as men first before we criticise others. The black races receive a fair share of our abuse and calumny, who, we admit, may not in all cases be scrupulous in their actions; but one thing can be said of black races with truth: that in many instances their mode, their social habits are preferable by far to modern civilisation. They may in some instances be cruel, but they are not hypocrites in this respect; for they have no pretences as regards humane actions.

But the white man is such a poor hypocrite, he has such a high opinion of himself and his institutions, and at times he fears that the poor savage is not so well off as himself, that in his kindness he really wants to civilise him; that is to say, appropriate his territory and, with the aid of force and religious mysticism, make him a slave for evermore.

Man is relentlessly cruel, what will he not do to satisfy his lust for gain? The deeds that have at various times been committed in the name of Mammon form the blackest pages of history; millions have been slaughtered so that the gluttonous desires of some might be satisfied. The warrior, the adept at slaying men, has from time immemorial been idolised by man as though he was a benefactor of the human race instead of a mortal pest. But the man who performs a humane or noble act comparatively does not receive the recognition that society owes him. While he who has the courage and intelligence to champion the cause of the oppressed is relegated to a dungeon. Such is the morbid condition of society.

That the age of universal peace will come there are no doubts; but to make that possible justice must be recognised by mankind; the wealth produced by the worker shall not be centralised amongst the idle few who never produced it. It is private ownership which is responsible for the prevalence of barbarous conflicts. With its decay greed and avarice would disappear. The brotherhood of man would be an accomplished fact, hatred and jealousy between men would be reduced to a minimum, and so would the conflicts we are accustomed to at the present time; for there would be no markets to struggle for. The time will come when man will not bear arms against his fellow, when there will no longer be any artificial barriers separating men; empires and frontiers and other so-called "blessings of civilisation" will give place to the world of reason and justice. War—the outcome of greed and stupidity—would then be an Anachronism. R. C. M.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Our Belgian comrade, Victor Willems, about whom a note appeared in our September issue, was on Feb. 1st sentenced at Brussels to fifteen years penal servitude for resisting the police on Aug. 11th last. *Heavy sentence on an Anarchist!* ran the headlines in the English newspapers next day, and we can imagine our bourgeois friends rubbing their hands as they chuckled, "One Anarchist the less!" One the less, it may be, to breathe open defiance against Might as personified in the majestic word Police—fifteen years of prison will choke the bravest spirit—but our bourgeois friends appear to forget that loose and disordered as the brotherhood may seem in their somnolent eyes, Anarchists are well aware that the battle they fight against prejudice and oppression is a fierce one; and, knowing it, just as in every struggle worth the name, no sooner does one man drop out of the ranks than two leap into the breach. Discontent, the breeder of *isms*, must die before Anarchism can yield the ghost, and Discontent cannot die till its causes are removed. As little as the rope or the guillotine will sever or unjust sentences destroy either philosophic or that other kind of Anarchism, labelled "militant," the fear of which sits to-day on the brow of every king constraining each to wear a detective with his purple—the Empress Frederick carries five around in her train just now at Bordighera, and whene'er she takes her walks abroad one paces in front and a second behind his imperial mistress, a pair of petted lapdogs who never leave

her out of sight. Strange compensation of Fate, that Royalty to-day as it basks on the Riviera is forced to share the pangs of the humblest philosophic Anarchist "shadowed" in London! No, a heavy sentence will not slay nor even check the advance of the Anarchist ideal. For who are the Anarchists? Not men who drink champagne and loll out of Piccadilly windows while their wives flash by in raiment stained with the tears of their toiling sisters; not men with rent rolls and sounding titles bought with gold, chicanery or the slaughter of their fellow-creatures; but *thinking men* upon whom the stress and strain of life bear hardly; who suffer either personally from bitter want and penury or live their lives out amongst those struggling like drowning men in a sea of misery with the wave of Hunger for ever beating against their lips. Men whose hearts are filled, not with the sentimental pity of the wealthy as they fling their surplus guineas into the maw of charity organisations, but whose breasts throb with hot impatience and fiercer indignation at wrongs and sufferings which not only are remediable but would, if left to the humanity and commonsense of mankind, be remedied but for the unhallowed determination of the ruling minority that injustice must be justified lest the divine rights of Property and holy privileges of Class be jeopardised.

But, of course, the police definition of "Anarchists" is, that they are merely a gang of gamblers, counterfeiterers and vicious brawlers, with a sprinkling of decent and intellectual persons who are mad or they would know better than to consort with such characters. This being so, it is naturally to the interest of such men as Mommaerts and his companions of the Secret Service to compel resistance where the victim is passive and to provoke it where a spark has shown life before. Willems, a small lean man of insignificant appearance, had twice already been guilty of disrespect to the police, but for the past three years had lived a quiet, industrious life, had given up active propaganda and spent his energies in securing a comfortable home for his parents. A more attached family than the Willems' apparently did not exist in Brussels. But he had been too quiet; mild Anarchists must be roused or it reads badly in Secret Service reports. How Willems was poked up has already been told in these *Notes*, and our prophecy that no mercy would be shown him in spite of nothing having been found during the police search to militate against his character, has proved true. He was convicted, not as a man of excitable temperament, maddened, as Sebastien Faure tells us in his *Journal du Peuple*, by the attempted violation at pistol point of what we hold most dear—the secrets of one's family and private life—but solely as an Anarchist. Many witnesses came forward to plead for our comrade. His burgomaster, his employer for whom he had worked six years, Govers, a police official, who declared that if the case had been placed in his hands no trouble would have occurred, his neighbours who one and all spoke to his devotion to his parents, to the model household, to the sensitive nature of the man; but the prisoner was an Anarchist and all such representations were empty phrases in the ears of a prejudiced court. Even the evidence of two good bourgeois in his favor was questioned. These declared that Mommaerts remarked to them that he had brought down "one of them," meaning the workman, Laenaerts, who was shot during the running fire in Willems' house; Mommaerts denied that he had ever used such words, and in face of Laenaert's declaration in court that his revolver was pointing full at him when he fell, maintained that Willems had shot his own friend. So, also, the prosecuting attorney, who with the virulent determination to pluck out every germ of pity that might be sprouting in the bosom of the bourgeois jury, asserted that if Willems had been quiescent for three years it was simply to throw dust in the eyes of those about him. "I do not wish to cheapen the few good qualities Willems has," remarked this dispenser of justice, "he is an industrious worker and a good son—but he is an Anarchist. The definition of Anarchism is written in history in letters of blood. Anarchism is Luccheni, is Henry, is Caserio. The Anarchist is one who commits a crime for the sake of that crime." Little use after this for the prisoner's attorney to plead that the prosecution was trying to extort a harsh verdict while all he demanded was a just one. "But if he gets the maximum penalty it will be but five years," retorted the attorney general. The president of the court summed up, and the jury retired to consider whether or no Willems had fired upon eleven persons with murderous intent. They returned with a verdict of guilty as regarded eight out of the eleven counts, Willem's friend Laenaerts being included among the eight. The prisoner's attorney put in a strong plea for extenuating circumstances, which Willems quickly negatived with a shake of the head, but extenuating circumstances never hold good in an Anarchist trial; a man may possess every known virtue but if he is an Anarchist and has resisted authority he is doomed. Willems is at once sentenced not to five but to fifteen years penal servitude. Then, as the Belgian papers report, "with much dignity and courage the prisoner turned to the public and without any conceit or affected display waved a farewell hand to his friends—a simple action which yet portrayed all the sorrow and resignation of the condemned." And so exit Victor Willems—good son, good workman, good Anarchist. Next!

From Geneva we learn that Luccheni has been transferred to the prison which while life lasts will be his tomb. Surrounded by police he was one midnight escorted through the streets of the sleeping town and incarcerated in the penitentiary. It was the last time his feet would beat against the stones of a street and he was noticed to shudder as the party stood beneath the prison walls, then he pulled himself together and passed through the gate with an air of resolution. He has become very white in face and feeble owing to want of air and food. "Free Switzerland has abolished the penalty of death, but has substituted for it slow torture in a living tomb," says an Italian contemporary.

The so-called secrets of the Anti-Anarchist Conference, which was the immediate result of Luccheni's action, begin to slowly leak out. An Italian comrade, a working mason, having had the audacity to speak at a meeting in Hungary, three weeks ago, has since been arrested and handed over to the Italian police. In England the Italian comrades are being systematically coerced and terrorised by Scotland Yard; comrade Barton, whose grievance against the London Postal officials appeared in *Reynolds* issue of Feb. 26, is not the only English Anarchist whose letters appear to interest the paternal eye of government; while the "shadowed" increase in number. Legislation is also promised us in the Queen's Speech. And yet we repeat fearlessly that no police conference or system nor any amendments to the laws of the realm will exorcise Anarchism, which is the spirit of revolt, out of this or any country until social inequalities and the glaring canker of Injustice breathe their last.

The third Republic in France lost its sixth President on Feb. 16th; and he, the second (Carnot being the first) to die in office, was killed by worry. Thiers and MacMahon resigned in disgust, Grévy in disgrace over the Panama scandals, Casimir-Perier because he felt powerless; yet, undaunted, Emil Loubet now reigns, and France, uneasy but with her usual gaiety, accepts what she does not feel strong enough to avert. After all, one fool is as good as another to head a republic when the republic is there and Revolution in a concrete form is not. Déroulède's crazy attempt to demolish the Parliamentary party by a *coup d'état* carried out at point of flattery and cheap cigars in place of bayonets, only serves to emphasize the quiet dignity with which the French Anarchists met an acute situation. Instead of prancing around the heels of a general's charger in the vain hope of urging it to kick rider and Orleans into the Elysée, Sebastian Faure occupies himself with a letter to the new President appealing for justice to prisoners without hope, for the dismissal of corrupt ministers, for the freeing of innocent victims. Not but what he was prepared to head a revolution were the time ripe for such, as witness the following appeal, which appeared in the *Journal du Peuple* of Feb. 19:

CITIZENS,

The death of President Felix Faure was but an incident. But the Nationalists have intervened and created a revolutionary situation. So much the better. Faithful to the policy of intimidation and blackmailing which has secured their political fortune—the fortune of a day—they now dare to menace free citizens with Lebel rifles if the one elected by Congress is not the elect of their choice. Which of you will bow to such a summons? Citizens, did we submit, we know too well from their past, their intrigues, their own avowal, towards what military and clerical reaction they move, and that their supreme desire is to force this country five centuries backwards, which would be the result did we submit for one hour to their laws. We know these veterans and Jesuits too well who call themselves Drumont, Méline, Millevoje, Jamont, de Lac, Rochefort, de Mun, Didon, Cavaignac. To-morrow, nothing would remain of our few liberties; to-morrow would mean the entire work of the Revolution compromised and the principle itself would be lost if we permit these men to be our masters. They would make one immense jail of a country seeking enfranchisement along sorrowful ways. Will you permit such a crime? Dare you submit to such shame? By showing weakness, will you prove yourselves accomplices of this attempt? No. It is false that anything may be undertaken against the Democracy of France and that it dare not defend itself. Enervated as she is by twenty-nine years of broken hopes and outraged promises, this yet remains the healthiest, the strongest, the most earnest, the most decisive and resolute force within her. Against the shooters, should they resume the arms of 1871, the sons of the federated will range themselves. Our enemies say they are ready. We are ready also. You are ready, citizens. You have never wished that justice should be strangled and the light quenched. You will never permit Liberty to be throttled. The reactionists dream of ruin and of blood. Let them beware? Upon these ruins the noble image of the Revolution will be raised. In this blood the liberties of the future will germinate.

THE PROPAGANDA.

Canning Town Group meets every second Thursday in the month.

LIBERTARIAN LECTURE SOCIETY.

Our second series of lectures began on Jan. 15, when T. J. Cobden-Sanderson of the General and Executive Committee of the Italian Political Prisoners' Aid Society, after a few words of introduction by Kropotkin, read a thoughtful and highly poetical paper upon *Craft Guilds of the Future—an Ideal*. The two final words were wisely added; for before such Guilds as our friend Sanderson's could be called into being, some form of Socialism must have widely changed present-day conditions. As with ancient Guilds, the aim of those of the future would be twofold—excellent and artistic workmanship coupled with a paternal regard for the welfare of the craftsman. The world of industry would represent little less than a vast co-operative workshop in which men would be working for the good of all, and not as now merely for private ends. Gradually all the craft would be brought into close touch until finally we should see a federation of Guilds with their noble halls and workshops, their enlivening Festivals, and schools of beauty. Entering into various details, the lecturer drew a vivid picture—such as would have warmed Morris's heart—of the bright life in store for the craftsman of the future, when he would work among congenial and beautiful surroundings, and by means of travelling instructors, lectures, etc., have the sense of honesty of design and beauty fostered in him. The lecturer had a high opinion of workingmen as a class and believed that at all times men preferred doing good work to bad—an opinion which in question-time was challenged, it being the experience of some present that if scamping and bad work brought in more money good work at a lower sum was at a discount. While Capitalism enthalls

the world, no workman has the chance of asserting any honesty or originality of thought or design; these are crushed out by the dead level brought about by competition and the mere struggle for bread.

Fenton Macpherson spoke on the following Sunday upon *The Belgian Labor Party*, a subject with which he is thoroughly familiar, having visited Belgium and as a French scholar been able to grasp the situation at first hand. There seemed to him this wide difference between our own Labor Party and the Belgian, that while it was facts that stirred us into action, with them principle was the lever. Theirs was the nobler sentiment, but race characteristics were probably what determined the difference; foreigners hug an ideal; we, slow of brain and less impressionable, hug the fact. The Belgian Labor Party has gone through the same throes as ours in the struggle for recognition and freedom, but fighting comes easy both to Flamand and Walloon; their country is the historic battle-ground of Europe and the fighting burghers of the old Flemish cities have left their spirit behind them. The Party as it stands to-day is purely Socialist and is well represented in parliament, requiring but 30 more seats to become a menace to the Clerical Party. Their one effort is to become as strong, and to this end no means of propaganda is lost. A paper, *Le Conserit*, is actually maintained for the sole purpose of imbuing the army with the Socialist spirit, and the young recruits cheerfully undergo ten days in the cells as the penalty for reading or discussing its doctrine. Secretly and surely the seed is being sown, and with a corrupt government and degenerate Royal Family the day of the Labor Party is at hand. A nobler spirit than ours rules the Belgian trade unions—they take a wide interest in the welfare of others than their own; their aims are international while the British trade unionist stands for himself alone. Our co-operative ventures are chiefly based on the profit-sharing system while Socialist propaganda is the main thought of the Belgian. Large sums of money are spent yearly on this last alone. Maisons du Peuple are rising in all the chief cities, being handsome buildings comprising shops, meeting hall, library, café, etc. Their promoters are able to borrow large sums when needed; for, bent on fighting Capitalism with its own weapons, the Belgian Socialists have become landed proprietors and as property owners at once acquire the respect of the bourgeoisie. When English Socialists begin to own property they also will acquire the respect of the enemy, and be better equipped to fight Capitalism on its own lines. Our comrade concluded with the statement that there were Anarchists but no Anarchist Party in Belgium. (?)

Jan. 29th saw our friend T. R. Marr on the platform, who talked upon *Ideals: their place in Practical Life*. To-day, as he pointed out, the hurry and stress of life prevented ordinary men from having either the leisure or capacity for living up to an ideal, and even if they had one it was usually, as Ruskin styled it, "very sordid." The life of men might be summed up under three heads: 1. the fact of life—comprising its mere bodily sensations, such as hunger, etc.; 2. the physiological and political view of life—its theories; 3. the ideals of life—feelings. "Feelings" have played a large part in the history of the world; but ideals, so-called, do not come readily to primitive people, they are, with æsthetic and moral conceptions, the gradual product of civilisation. Ideas form the basis of theories—ideals spring from feelings. Like some star of Bethlehem, an ideal will light the onward and upward path of the man who possesses it, and men should cherish and not scoff at or smother a nascent ideal when such germinates within them. The masons who in the Dark Ages built the cathedrals that no modern masons can build; the decorators, such as Raphael and Michael Angelo—not modern artists, these, with West End studios, but decorators in the noblest sense of the word—all worked in the glow of a cherished ideal; their work thus became but the outer expression of themselves, the best they had in them was there for all men to see. To-day, men, glorying in being purely practical and unhampered by ideals, stand up as exponents of all that is base and most sordid in art and craft, while our system of education increases the evil by forcing our children into a groove which suppresses originality in every direction. We live in a world where the man of the street, the ordinary man, is divided into two classes—the men who worship a dead ideal, and the men who live without an ideal. Thus England wallows in a sea of general apathy to all that is wrong and bestial in its environment, the Londoner above all being content to eat and laugh only, although living, as one had said, "in a happiness that was hell." To wake men out of this apathy should be the aim of every idealist.

ROCHELLE ZOLZMAN AT CARDIFF.

Our comrade Rochelle Zolzman has been making quite a stir in Cardiff, and her brief visit will, no doubt, set many people thinking and help them to study social questions from an Anarchist point of view. She has been able during her stay to take part in discussions, to give a lecture and to arouse sufficient local interest to get interviewed to the extent of a column and a half in the *Western Mail*. We cannot, unfortunately, give in full the accounts which the *Western Mail* has published, but the following extract will be of interest: "At an informal meeting on Sunday afternoon Miss Zolzman explained to a select but somewhat numerous audience the practical steps favored by the intellectual Anarchists for the realization of what they admitted was as yet but an ideal. 'This,' concluded she, in a burst of passionate eloquence, 'is more to me than a bread and butter question. Nor do I wish to live on grand ideals. I want to see the people free.' This speech quite staggered the audience, and a few of them who belonged to the S.D.F. asked questions, but Miss Zolzman was more than a match for them all. On Sunday night Rosser's Lecture Hall, Barry Dock, was crowded to excess, the occasion being a debate on Socialism v. Anarchism between Miss Zolzman and Mr. Buzo, a member of the Barry School Board."

The "interview" is interesting reading and except that there seems some confusion over the question of "violence" the Anarchist position is very fairly reported. Comrade Zolzman was most courageous and outspoken on the woman question. The following reply to a query seems to us an excellent epitome of woman's present position: "So long as the man is the breadwinner and the woman dependent upon him, the woman will be the slave and have to do all that the man wants her to do. It is not by being merely a housekeeper that she can attain independence. The lot of a woman under the existing system seems to me to be far from happy. She is at the mercy of her parents before marriage and at the mercy of her husband after marriage. That is not independence."

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