

Freedom

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ONE WAR OVER—WHEN IS THE NEXT?

The South African war is over. A territory larger than that of France has been laid waste. The rich farms that covered it have been burned; the cattle have been slaughtered; the population—men, women and children—have been murdered, carried away, decimated by disease; and the survivors will speak of the British invasion as the Russians speak still of the Mongol, or the Hungarians speak of the Turkish invasion of times gone by. Some thirty thousand of the invaders themselves have been killed in the battle-fields; a hundred thousand of them have been incapacitated for life; and the whole of the invading nation has been thrown fifty years back in its intellectual, social and industrial development, in its social institutions and political ideals. Intellectually and morally the nation has gone back to what it was in the times of the last Georges.

And why was this war waged? For getting hold of certain gold mines, without which the South African companies—of which all the upper ten and titled robbers are either shareholders or debtors—would have become a mere stinking bubble that would have burst some time ago on the Stock Exchange. For becoming the only masters of millions of blacks, and after having destroyed their village-communities, taken their land and cattle, and imposed upon them a tax which they are quite unable to pay—to deliver these blacks to the gold-mining companies, saying to them: "Here are plenty of cattle for you. Make that cattle work for any wages you like, or no wages if you prefer! They are your serfs—slavery is antiquated, you know, but serfdom *is not*, and we introduce it! This is the reward for the willingness you have always shown to oblige the titled aristocracy with your shareholders' millions."

Three years they have sown death and devastation in Africa to achieve this result. They refrained from no cruelty and no barbarity in subduing the heroic little nation of 300,000 inhabitants, all told, which had defied the British Empire;—and when this result has been achieved, when peace is going to be concluded between the two bleeding combatants—what we have to ask ourselves is this: "The South African war is over,—when will the North African war begin?"

There is no use, indeed, in shutting our eyes to the real condition of things. The conquest of the Transvaal means *in an immediate future*, the conquest of Egypt. The conquest of the Johannesburg gold mines is only the first step towards the Cape to Cairo—"railway," as they say when in reality they mean the Cape to Cairo British territory. The South African war has rendered the North African war an historical necessity.

Every intelligent Britisher must have realised, indeed, by this time, that the conquest of the Boer republics was only possible on account of specially favorable conditions which prevailed on the continent. The German emperor preferred to take from Britain four or five good bribes, for keeping quiet. Even knights-errant become commercial in this age, and the German knight took, in exchange for the menace contained in his bellicose telegram, the following bribes: (1) the right of building a German railway in Asia Minor, (2) the right of putting his nose in the Yang-tse-kiang region, (3) the Samoan archipelago, and (4)—we undertake to make a little prediction—the port of Beira in the coming partition of Portuguese Africa. As to France, she was hampered by her ally, Russia, who can do nothing so long as her robberies on the Pacific and in Manchuria are not "consolidated."

However, such favorable conditions will not last for ever, and the British statesmen's dream is the complete annexation of Egypt and the Soudan. How much easier, indeed, it would have been to fight the Boers, if Britain could have moved against them fifty thousand Soudanese—which she could *not* do, as she is not yet the master of Egypt. An African empire, without an African army, would be as bad as India would have been without a native army in the hands of the British. But where to get this army? It cannot be composed of Boers. It

can only be found in the Soudan,—and consequently the conquest of Egypt, even at the cost of an immediate war with France, is rendered absolutely unavoidable. British statesmen know it, and during the Fashoda incident they had tried to force France to accept a war with Britain, before the Boer war; to which the French statesmen wisely replied: "Fight the Boers first." This has been done, and now a war with France for the "consolidation of the African empire," as they say, will have to be fought.

Wars, wars, wars,—we have a provision of them in view for fifty years to come, and no one can say what will be the result of those wars for these islands. In Napoleon's times this country had a resource which other countries had not. It was totally exhausted by the Napoleonic wars, but it felt that, after the wars were over, it could and should become the pioneer of industrialism and conquer the world trade. Now, it has not that resource,—an easy enrichment having undermined the vital forces of the country, while so many young and energetic competitors have grown round her. No one can, therefore, foretell the result of the policy of conquest which has been inaugurated in 1895, and of which the Transvaal war is only the first and the least dramatic incident.

But whose fault is it that the country has been thrown into that policy of war adventures?

Is it the fault of Chamberlain? of Rhodes? of the Stock Exchange?

No, certainly not.

It was, first of all, and above all, *the fault of the British worker*. They, the workers, ran like a flock of sheep behind Chamberlain. That man was *their* representative, *their* incarnation. One word from them, one important labor manifestation would have prevented the war from being declared. They did not want to say it.

Since 1885, when the first Socialist awakening began in this country, the British workers had been told by those middle class people whom they listened to, that they must not let themselves be dragged into the Socialist or the Anarchist camp. "That is good for hungry and stupid Frenchmen,—not for the solid British worker who is accustomed to a well-being that the hungry German and Frenchee can never dream of!"—they were told, and they believed it. "Leave revolutions for those continental fools! We have better things to do. Let us conquer Africa, China! More territory! More serfs all over the world! That will make us rich, and we, amalgamated dukes, princes and stock-brokers, will share our riches with you, brave British workers." And so they do now. They share the bread-tax in equal parts.

"Down with all you rascals! Give me back my land, my factories, the railways I have built and created—and I need no slaves in Africa!"—this is the only cry that the British workers ought to have had for all these bloodsuckers. And if he is not intelligent enough to see where he is being driven by his leaders—the awakening will be sad, both for him and the whole of his country. Carthage, Genoa, have already perished from having had too many slaves. And England will be driven to the same dilemma: Either death or the Social Revolution.

JIMMIE, THE WEAVER.

Fitchburg, Mass., March 23. The entire force of weavers in the Fitchburg worsted mills and the Beoli mills of the American Woollen Company struck today in sympathy with the Rhode Island employees of the combine in the struggle against the two-loom system in that state.—*Chicago Daily News*.

Jimmie, the weaver, isn't a weaver; he is a sweeper.

Jimmie used to be a weaver, but now he sweeps out the factory and does odd jobs around;—jobs an old man can do. That's what they call him: "the old man." He is forty-five years old. All men in factory towns in New England are "old" when they are forty-five. As soon as they lose their nimbleness they are cashiered; or the fining system drives them out. Men's fingers are less nimble than women's anyhow; particularly young girls'.

As Jimmie isn't under the strain of watching the looms for a break he is always ready to talk; particularly if he can get off in a corner

with you, where the superintendent doesn't see him. Jimmie is faithful enough about the jobs he does; as faithful as you can expect an old man of forty-five to be; but he has been quaking at the thought of the superintendent for so many years; he has been afraid of losing his job for so long, that a furtive, hunted manner has become a sort of second nature to him, and he peers about between the looms as if he expected to be caught and kicked for something he knows he is perfectly innocent of.

You can't expect Jimmie to be a man when he has lived a cowering slave since he was thirteen.

That is not the way men are made.

"Look at that line," said Jimmie. He pointed over the high window ledge. It was nearly noon and a dozen men with "full dinner pails" were filing into the factory yard.

"Late, aren't they?" I said. He read my lips and understood.

"Divil a bit," he screeched, above the roar of the looms. "On time! the whistle will blow in a minute."

The whistle blew and then he told me.

The men were bringing the dinners to their wives and daughters who worked at the looms. They were all old men, all of them over forty;—too old to work.

In the New England factory towns the women earn the living and the men wash and cook and look after the neighbours' children. While they are both young enough the mothers and fathers work in the factories together.

This is a fine thing for conjugal felicity; this working together of husband and wife. Of course they get no chance to speak to one another at the factory; and there are so many things to do around "home" that they don't get much chance there either, until the supper dishes are washed up at eight or nine o'clock. Then—if they are not tired, and the baby is asleep so they cannot get acquainted with it—is when they have their conversations about art, and literature and the merits of the latest opera. As they are seldom tired, this is the pleasantest time of the day. The strain of watching the looms all day on their feet is removed and they thoroughly enjoy the relaxation.

Of course they cannot go about much. If they should be out two or three nights a week at the opera or concert it might impair their health.

Daylight comes quickly when you are out till twelve or one. Then, too, there is no one to leave the baby with. It has been tended all day by some one else.

When both mother and father, all winter long, go into the factory at daybreak and don't come out of it till night fall there are a few things about "home" to be done, both before they go, and after they return.

For example, there is the washing. By getting up before five o'clock—two or three hours before daylight—and working together by the light of a kerosene lamp, they can get that done. Then comes the ironing; they handle that the same way. The baby makes washing and ironing before daylight a pretty steady job.

Then there is breakfast, scanty enough; they have to hustle so. Seven o'clock comes so soon in the winter, and they can't afford to be locked; they run that risk all day.

Then there is the baby. If the baby had any sense it wouldn't expect attention from a mother who worked all day in the factory and had to do the cooking and dishwashing and marketing and sewing and washing and ironing before daylight and after dark. But babies *haven't* any sense. If they had they might blow up the universe, or refuse to be born; but they haven't.

The mothers who work all the week in the factories for six or seven dollars pay some young girl (under thirteen) or some old man (over forty) two or three dollars a week for looking after their babies.

The baby's idea of a mother is a man with a bottle of thin milk.

The mothers' net compensation for the week's work is three or four dollars and the pleasure of hearing their babies cry for someone else—the one they are used to, and who feeds them. On Sunday, if the washing and sewing are caught up and the house doesn't need cleaning (No "nice" person can bear to see a workman's house that is not clean!) perhaps the mother and father may have an hour or two to play with the baby, or to get a breath of sun and air.

It is a great life, this life of a man and woman together sharing their common tasks. They haven't, of course, much to occupy them except work, but they have plenty of that, and that is the only thing the weavers are afraid of losing.

At least Jimmie says so.

Why they should be afraid of losing work is a mystery. The "nice" people surely don't want to do it. But Jimmie says when work is slack "the kids goes hungry."

Doubtless they cannot save much on six or seven dollars a week and the rent to pay.

As soon as the babies grow up and look large enough not to make their "age thirteen" certificate a lie on its face, it will be easier; their wages will then eke out.

Jimmie says: "You always think good times is comin', but they always beat you somehow. When the kids grows up it don't seem to make no difference. The more comes in the more goes out, it seems."

Now, the double-loom is the threatening monster.

Jimmie doesn't know much about capitalism, but you can't fool him about the double-loom. That is what the strike is about now. The man is fighting the machine.

The double-loom system was developed five years ago. It was born in the textile mills of Philadelphia; that's why people have been so slow in hearing about it.

In Philadelphia the double-loom system is employed in the weaving of all woollens, except the heaviest fabrics and those most difficult to weave. In the light fabrics for summer wear one weaver frequently operates four looms. The Philadelphia weaver receives no greater pay now for the operation of four looms than was received five years ago for the operation of one. The pay of many weavers is less than \$8 per week. Women are preferred as weavers in many mills, because of their expertness and "tractability." It is easier to bluff and browbeat them.

Even if extra compensation were allowed, the double-loom system would be murderous.

"Look," said Jimmie at the top of his voice, after the nooning was over and the crashing had begun again, "You wouldn't think that they was doin' anything, would you?"

Here the girls had but one loom. They could look after their neighbours' for a few minutes if brief absence were necessary. They stood about, quiet, unmoved, reposeful, in the deafening din.

I looked at the nearest girl. Her face was pale and she was as reposeful as the others; but her repose, as that of the others, was the repose of nervous tension. Her eyes, apparently roving, were keenly alert, and her ears were cocked for the slightest noise which would indicate a break, or a float or other fault in the swiftly running threads. Even as I looked, she sprang like a cat to her loom, her nimble fingers flew for an instant so rapidly my eyes could not follow them, and then she relapsed into the old attitude of repose.

"The nervous strain of this work is devilish!" I hissed into Jimmie's ear; and I thought of the "nice" people running about the city shops and buying the lives of these girls in their bargains of dimities, challies, batistes, mulles and organdies.

"I bet you," grinned Jimmie, roaring and screeching alternately, "but s'pose they were tendin' three or four o' 'em! That 'ud lay 'em out in a few years. Then they'd have to have their hands and eyes in several places at once. They gets docked if they spoils a piece;—it's took out o' their wages. My fines was so big I owed the company money every pay day. If I'd a' bin runnin' more'n one loom I'd be owin' 'em money yet."

Jimmie laughed a loud, mirthless laugh above the crash of the machinery—"the loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind."

The double-loom system originated with the weavers themselves. When a weaver was not at work, the one whose loom was next in line asked to be allowed to run the two looms. This request was frequently granted, and the operatives made double wages. Mill owners observing that one weaver could, in an emergency, do what until then was considered the work of two, made it a rule that two looms should be run, instead of one. This aroused a storm of protest, but it has since been generally enforced in Philadelphia.

Now the American Woollen Company wants the double-loom system in Rhode Island. A single-loom system cannot compete with a double-loom system.

When one factory grinds up more human life than another factory, competition does the rest.

"The rest o' 'em has got to come to it," says Jimmie.

Jimmie lives in one of the company's houses built all in a row. There are no fences and no gardens. The grass is trampled flat.

"Do they make you live there—in their houses?"

Jimmie cocked an eye and looked about; then he came close up to me. "No, they don't say nothin' about it; but when they has to let a feller go, it's generally the feller that lives in the houses the company don't own. I lives in a company house. I got one boy and two girls here in the factory and I don't take no chances."

"What a *splendid* encouragement for the workers to own their own homes!" I thought.

If a whole family, like Jimmie's, works and saves and buys a little hut for their own, it is used against them. They'll work cheaper before they'll leave it;—and workmen's houses are built by the company to rent for profit, not to stand empty at a loss.

Jimmie is a regular politician.

He does not wait for a house to fall on him before he catches on; that is certain.

He evidently hates to be everlastingly under the eye of the company;—he would at least like to shake off the incubus in his home life and have another landlord, but he has been crushed too long; his manhood has long since dwindled into mere transparent craft.

Jimmie is a product of the system.

Competition to make goods at a profit made Jimmie; and it is making his children on the same model. It is a wonderful system for preserving and dignifying human life. Jimmie's children are not yet in the mills; they look under "age: thirteen."

The dear, good people of the Consumers' League say at great length in the newspapers that "childhood shall be sacredly preserved for the play-ground, the school-room and the home."

"The home;" that is very touching!

A home which, instead of a mother and a father, has a tired man and woman who go away at daylight and return after dark; that is a home to "sacredly preserve," *isn't* it?

A life that is a funeral procession from the cradle to the grave; that's lovely, *isn't* it?

But they're making so much money; the greedy things!

In 1875 or thereabouts they made fifty or sixty dollars a month running one loom. Now they have to run three or four looms and drop out, nervous wrecks, at forty-five,—to earn thirty to thirty-five dollars.

These nasty strikers! Are they *never* satisfied? Do they expect to live as people live who have an "independent income?"

This is the greatest nation in the world. Last year "we" produced \$2,000,000,000 worth of goods more than "we" could consume. Mr. Depew said so.

"Do you think you could consume an extra shirt, Jimmie, out of the \$2,000,000,000, if you had wages enough to buy it?"

But Jimmie shook his head; he doesn't understand politics; and he has learned by a long and successful career that if you expect to keep your job there is only one way to vote.

Jimmie never takes any chances.

[Reprinted in *Lucifer* from *The Socialist Spirit*.]

PARTIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE.

Well, what have we to say about political parties? Strange, is it not, that we should make objections to them. But still we do; not because we are capricious, but because reason permits us to see discrepancies which are hidden by the worship of ancient traditions and customs. Ibsen's scathing condemnation of them in his drama, "The Enemy of Society," is well worthy of note: "A party is like a sausage machine; it grinds all the heads together in one mash; and that's why there are so many blockheads and fat-heads all seething together!"—A few words that convey much that is important to mankind. We agree; because, having submitted these organisations to analysis, having examined the principles which are involved and their influence on the individuals who compose the aggregate, we have become convinced that they do not contribute to human progress to the degree which is generally supposed. That their presumed progress is more or less delusive in character. Hence our position.

Parties—for whatever purpose they are established, whether for political, social, economical or ethical objects—are mostly formed with the idea of carrying out certain fixed principles under the direct influence and domination of officials and majorities. Therefore, any individual who wishes to co-operate is fettered by the ideas which the majority of a party impose. The expression of independent ideas is discouraged. Very often the mere deviation from "cast-iron" rules (perhaps it may only be on some minor question) is sufficient to bring contempt and derision and, perhaps, finally ostracism.

Now, it may be contended that this does not prevail; but it is possible to prove that parties by their mere construction are more or less conservative and reactionary in their influence. To whatever degree they fetter the individual as regards ideas, in an equal ratio they destroy independent thought and action.

How many are there who as members of a party cannot recall the fact of having had their independent ideas suppressed merely because, unlike their confreres, they refuse to run in a groove, but as men assert their individuality—their freedom to use their mental faculties in the cultivation of new ideas unfettered by the whims and caprices of that congealed and fossilised element—the majority. Men who have dared to stand alone have always been derided and persecuted by these time-servers.

Therefore it must be clear to anyone that whereas many parties claim to be progressive, they do not recognise the cultivation of originality and individuality, elements which stimulate healthy activity, the absence of which can only lead to inertia and decay.

The two dominant features which operate in the affairs of these bodies are Authority and Majority Rule. Two principles which every true progressive must combat. There is nothing more powerful in retarding progress than these pernicious and enervating elements which exist, as we know, solely for protecting the interests of the wolves of society. But whoever can agree that the majority are most progressive? Have they ever displayed any wisdom? Let the social conditions that prevail to-day answer the question. As a matter of fact, all progress emanates from minorities; they are the innovators of new truths and ideas.

Therefore we say that it is morally wrong to support a principle merely because it emanates from a majority or a party. To do so is to forget your own individuality, it is mental slavery of the worst description.

But what of such bodies as the I.L.P. or S.D.F., struggling as they are to realise a better condition of life, yet they have been so kind as to utilise principles which belong to a system which they condemn. Yes; compromise upon compromise, until they become entirely assimilated by Capitalism, until there is scarcely anything left but what is reactionary. They are congealed and inert merely because their methods of action are stale and worm-eaten; because they will not recognise those factors of progress: freedom, individual initiative and, consequently, originality.

Therefore they will not be able to accommodate themselves to the ever-changing atmosphere of new ideas and aspirations, and as a result they will become petrified and lost in the mists of

dying traditions and superstition. Unless, perchance, they follow with craven fear in the rear of those who have carried forward the banner of Truth and Progress; but at present there are no signs of this taking place. Nil desperandum.

But there is one consolation: that if progress does not take place inside this type of organisation, well then it does outside in millions of different ways. Humanity will not wait while they are pottering about with politics and platitudes, but will leave them to meditate on their mistakes.

Unfortunately, even Trade Unions are not free from the evils which have been pointed out, under the domination as they are of executives and officials, who in some cases are magnified into gods whose authority may often be a danger to the interests of a Society. It is essential that all branches should preserve their autonomy more than is customary, and that dependence on so-called leaders should be discouraged. Let each worker develop his own individual initiative, then leaders will become obsolete. Trade Unions in the near future will have to develop different tactics to those they have been pursuing. The waste of time and energy in participating in small sectional strikes—often for small concessions—leaves the worker in the same economical position. On the contrary, we say: Develop that growing spirit of international solidarity, agitate for the international federation of trade unions, educate and organise—not for the mere increase of a paltry pittance, leaving you still a victim to capitalist tyranny—but for the General Strike and the abolition of the wage system altogether.

R. M.

THE SUREST POLICY.

If, for the sake of argument, we grant the contention of parliamentary Socialists that a day will ultimately arrive when they will be able to secure a majority in the legislature, this concession is far from implying the triumph of Socialism by constitutional means. The partisans of the existing order of things, though they denounce the unrighteousness of revolutionary action and tell us that such action is inexcusable since political power is now in the hands of the people, cannot in practice be expected to show any such resignation to the popular will. One of their prominent spokesmen, Professor R. Flint, in his book entitled *Socialism*, makes use of the following words which are well worthy the consideration of all who are inclined to think that our opponents will be as ready to obey laws distasteful to themselves as they are to counsel submission to us.

"Possibly the time may come when the people of Britain will be so infatuated as to send to Parliament a Socialist majority.

"But would a Socialist Parliament even with a Socialist majority of the people at its back be able to establish a Collectivist or Communist regime? Would not the minority opposed to it be superior in all the chief elements of power, except numbers, to the majority supporting it? And would not that minority have every motive to induce it to make the uttermost resistance to the order of things sought to be introduced? The immediate effect of Parliament passing into law a Collectivist programme would not be the establishment of Collectivism but the origination of social and civil war, out of which there has always come, and must come, the repression of free parliamentary government, and the substitution for it of military and absolutist government."

For my own part, I do not believe that the ruling classes will ever allow the people to place power in the hands of a majority acting in its interest; on the contrary, I am convinced, as I have remarked in my pamphlet *Socialism the Remedy*, that if the ruling class saw any immediate danger of its power being overthrown by that of the combined working classes, it would without hesitation make such changes in our political institutions or in the administration of them as would defeat any such attempt. What, therefore, will be gained if after waiting, it may be for generations, in order to secure a parliamentary majority, Socialists have to reckon with armed opposition after all? Is it not more reasonable to look the truth squarely in the face, and to prepare men's minds for the worst? Then we shall not be in danger of losing opportunities for the realisation of social justice which will probably present themselves long before the conquest of political power is likely to be effected by a Socialist majority of the people at large.

The conflict which is now going on in Belgium, and which will probably be over by the time these lines reach England, will, I trust, by its successful result have by that time impressed all minds with the supreme value of a general strike conducted with revolutionary fervour and dogged patience combined.

HENRY GLASSE.

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NOTES.

RETROGRESSION.

It is well to note that the *Labour Leader* (May 24th) is alive to the fact that "the hands of the Labour clock" have been set back—very much back—by the recent "legal" decisions, which the government of course refuse to inquire into. "We hope," it says, "that the Trade Unionists will see to it that the effect of the decision is imprinted on the mind of every working class voter." We were not aware that the "working class voter" had any mind to speak of. If he has, he certainly doesn't use it or he would have given up voting long ago. But the *Labour Leader* mustn't suppose that the government are afraid of the working class voter. They know very well he'll give them a turn, and then the political pendulum, which we suppose answers for the "mind" of the voter will sooner or later swing them out and the other party in. This is simply playing the game, and there is neither principle, progress, education or anything "conducive," as the *Clarion* would say, in it. No, the government have no occasion to worry about present-day "Labor men" and their objects. They have had their shout—*Rule Britannia!* we believe was the loudest cry—and now they must pay for it. But until they can resuscitate their manhood, and can sting the capitalist not only in what they say but what they do, they will be treated as they deserve to be treated.

INDUSTRIAL CARNAGE AND LEGISLATIVE PROTECTION.

The *Daily News* bemoans the fact that our industrial system claims such a very heavy tribute of blood in the shape of fatal accidents and non-fatal casualties, the figures for 1901 being 2,785 killed and 104,259 injured.

Under the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897, says the *Daily News*, the number of accidents has increased. And although since then other Acts have been passed to protect the workers in dangerous trades, the net result is that "the Compensation Act of the Conservative government has rendered the workman no safer than he was under the Liberal Employers' Liability Act." We have often given our reasons why legislation fails to help the worker, but our Social Democratic friends say we are wrong. Will they kindly tell us why the worker is told to put his hopes in parliamentary action with such an example as this before his eyes.

JUSTICE AND METAPHYSICS.

We are pervaded with a certain sentiment of sadness each time when we read in Socialist publications, that should bring the gospel of social and intellectual emancipation to the people, the glorification of those German metaphysics which at the beginning of the last century tried to impose under a vague terminology the old theological idea of an all-powerful god creating and developing by himself all existing order. It is natural that in Germany many cave-dwellers should still be found who think that Hegel's Self-developing Spirit is something other than the old biblical Creator, but it is astonishing when Socialists in France and England, under the morbid influence of such unscrupulous authors as Engels, begin to oppose to modern science and evolutionary philosophy which had banished all ideas of God and Authority from the conception of cosmic and social life, a sort of modern theosophy of Hegel, Schelling, Schlegel and others. France and England are the very countries where science has given mortal blows to those reactionary dreamings which were so patronised by the monarchs of the Holy Alliance in order to crush out the spirit and teachings of the Great Revolution.

It was Frenchmen, Lavoisier and Lamarck, who gave the sublime conception of evolutionary development in organic as well as inorganic life; it was Englishmen, Lyall, Darwin, Spencer and others, who definitely proved by innumerable facts that grand conception; and metaphysics together with theology were banished forever from contemporary scientific philosophy.

But under a strange pretence that none of those great scientific philosophers were Socialists, and on the other hand that among Socialists many were Deists and metaphysicians like Cabot, Louis Blanc, Marx and Engels, the Social Democrats of all Europe are in open war with modern science and try to convince the working classes that true

philosophy is metaphysics—with its backbone of Deism, Authority and Submission.

For instance, our contemporary, *Justice*, in its issue of May 17th, opposes, in its note on Herbert Spencer's latest work *Facts and Comments*, to the great evolutionary philosophy in the development of which Spencer has taken such a prominent part, the following; "One feels throughout a want of understanding of the great German philosophic movement ending with Hegel."

Evidently the author does not know that it was precisely this German metaphysics which was so persistently imposed during the first half of the last century on every university of the Continent by the governments, because it justified their power and the whole existing order with its slavery and exploitation. Kings, pope and ministers knew well what service Hegelian metaphysics rendered to their cause, but we thought that the aim of social and intellectual emancipation of humanity is quite opposed to theirs and that the duty of each Socialist is to fight every metaphysical theory which strengthens the cause of the enemies of the people.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

SPAIN.—On May 14th, as a prelude to the accession ceremonies at Madrid, the military court at Barcelona sentenced several Catalans who had hissed the national flag during a civic fête, to eight years imprisonment. A colossal sentence, but happily the Spanish prison authorities when not dealing with Anarchists are less keen to keep their gates closed than are the English or Italian, like certain dogs, their bark is worse than their bite, and the eight years sentence may expire quite suddenly in as many months. All sorts of Anarchist contingencies were prophesied and prepared for throughout Spain as the day came for the young king to take the oath. Many foreign police agents were rented to take special charge of the princes and Anarchists who came to the show, their orders being to pick a quarrel with any of the latter they recognised on the line of route and rush him into a police van. Perhaps there were not enough vans, for Spain is poor, or the Anarchists would not fight, at any rate, the few arrested were in prison prior to the procession day, a police plot having effectually removed Francisco Suarez from the scene, because eight years ago he had known Ruiz, who died by the accidental discharge of an explosive.

Here is a lesson in Spanish civic pride—would there were such spirit at home: the town of Santander, on the Bay of Biscay, has lately laid out some fine gardens on the sea-front. The view being blocked by a railway station, the company was given a new site, which, in the dog-in-the-manger temper of all companies, it refused. Thereupon a band of citizens marched to the building and burnt it down, the populace adding an empty train by way of fuel. Neither soldiers nor police interfered, nor were any arrests made. The Spaniards with their sublime contempt for capitalist company rights, are an example to every citizen in the world.

Just now amongst the workers there is great poverty, especially in agricultural districts like Andalusia. Lately the question came up in the Chamber. The Minister of Agriculture boldly declared expropriation of the landed proprietors was the only remedy. He was applauded. Next a member rose who as eloquently upheld the contrary. He received an ovation. He in turn was followed by the Conservative leader, who spoke long and ardently on the beauty of the Mauser rifle as a Government remedy for all workmen's ills. The majority listened uneasily, because this medicine is usually discussed less publicly, but in a moment after a few words upon the justice and humanity of the Government prescription, the crowd was with him. There were shouts of approval—one Minister wept in his seat, then rose and flung his arms round Dr. Mauser's champion. May they die in peace—but not before each has first known what it is to be hungry!

We hope that all English Anarchists will read an article in May *Contemporary Review*, by Stoddard Dewey, upon "The Anarchist Movement in Spain." He has nothing but praise for it as a coherent, well-developed and growing movement—a movement which should give every Government pause, because if only the Anarchists in other countries had combined on the same lines, instead of their being held in contempt to-day as a loose "rabble," the destinies of Europe might hang in their hand. From the first he proves how the entire Socialist movement in Spain developed under Anarchist auspices, and we are glad to note he pays a little tribute to *Solidarity*, the English Anarchist sheet started in New York in 1892, by Merlino, John Edelman and comrades, as the pioneer of the Congress held the following year in Chicago, and at which the main lines of the Spanish movement were laid down. We make but two quotations: "The preparations and steady growth in Spain of a recognisable Anarchist party began from the secrecy necessitated by the decree of January 3, 1874, when the Government declared the Federation (Workers) illegal."

"How to reconcile united and orderly effort which requires some sort of organisation, with the absence of authority, is a problem that French and Italian Anarchists have not even begun to solve, hence their comparative failure in gaining over the revolutionary elements of Socialism and the undue relief in which the individual element has appeared among them."

The writer, who indulges in no diatribes against Anarchists, is somewhat puzzled at the evidences of international fraternity they show. At Barcelona, in the recent strike troubles an Italian Anarchist with-

stood alone a police charge, and deliberately sacrificed his life for his principles and comrades, whilst a German is held for trial. These things astonish all in whom the Spirit of International brotherhood—the Anarchist creed *per se*—has not taken root, but to us who know there is nothing strange in suffering for a principle or dying for a comrade; it is our privilege, not one perhaps to seek, as the early Christians sometimes courted martyrdom, but one that the sincere Anarchist, when confronted with, never flies from. Meanwhile, comrades, if the Spanish system has called forth the admiration of a Philistine pen, it is one to be studied and discussed. Personally, we would like to have a hand in "wringing a Government's neck" before we die. Would not you?

BELGIUM.—To us as revolutionists the action of Van der Velde and Hector Denis, "the people's deputy," in abruptly ending the late general strike in the manner that has become historical, is astounding. With 300,000 men behind them what could they not have demanded and done? With exactly that same number of men Napoleon conquered Europe. But amongst modern Socialists no leader has as yet shown any symptom of real statesmanship or the courage that dares. They gather their forces behind them, the whole world stirs in expectancy—and then—"The King of France with 40,000 men walked up the hill and then walked down again"—this now appears to be the war-song of the Socialist leader of today. What can be sadder reading than the words of Denis: "For 40 years I have labored in the interests of the working classes, and now I and my party are again beaten!... Yet it has been a solemn warning to the Clericals; a great moral victory. Moral? Alas! moral only. So great a reform as universal suffrage can only be accomplished by money, or by violence. And by violence—never!" Who ever heard of a moral victory gaining the day in a contest for political or temporal power? "*I and my party*"—is not this the secret motto of nearly every Socialist leader? It is across the dead bodies, the upturned faces of his hypnotised, devoted followers, that he marches to his seat in the Chamber. When will the Socialist workers wake up to their rights as *men*, and not as Social Democrats only? When will they learn to have more faith in themselves and less in their leaders? What has been the direct result of Hector Denis's "solemn warning to the Clericals" and "great moral victory"? On May 25th certain elections took place by which the Clerical majority has been strengthened; the Catholics have carried seats everywhere, while the Government has gained all those newly created in the provinces; at Brussels the mayor has begun to prohibit open-air meetings, and a spirit of irresolution among the workers has become apparent. They pledged themselves to a childlike obedience to their Socialist deputies, and some begin to see it means kicks and not progress and advance. The call to arms to which they responded with such devotion and loyalty has ended in abject defeat, and to judge by their own papers they know it. The question is: what will they do with their knowledge? Elect more Deputy-leaders? One point in connection with the Belgian general strike is of interest. It is rumoured that a neighbouring power placed several regiments at the disposal of Leopold as he lay low in Ostend; they were ready to cross the frontier the instant that matters took a serious turn for the Government. So our paragraph in *March Freedom* hinting at Wilhem's bellicose intentions against organised workers was not far wrong.

RUSSIA.—Balbascheff, the man who had the courage to take justice into his own hands as regards Minister Sipiaguine, died for his act on May 16th. There is some mystery in respect to his identity, as in Russia in such incidents there sometimes is. He was tried and condemned at a secret military court-martial; he remained reticent and calm to the end. When asked as to his "accomplices," he gave the quick and apt response: "I have one accomplice—the *Russian Government*." Capital punishment is illegal in Russia except in cases of assassination of a member of the imperial family, so it would seem that the hanging of Balbascheff is a new measure instituted to terrify the self-sacrificing men or women who would free their country from the misrule of bad shepherds. But death has no terrors for those who dedicate themselves to Liberty, Justice and Progress. A week after Balbascheff died, it is reported that a high Russian official at Warsaw, Czernoy by name, was fatally shot by two men who escaped. At Vilna the Governor almost shared the same fate in revenge for his cruel orders regarding the flogging of peasants or persons expressing sedition. Again, it is said a loaded bomb was discovered in the handkerchief of a girl walking near the Tsar's palace at Zarskoe Selo—although the last story may be discounted. The police of every country must earn their pay, and promotion follows a plot.

The peasant agitation especially in Kharkoff has been ruthlessly suppressed where possible; Prince Obolensky, Governor of that province, was decorated for the manner in which his Cossacks flogged rebels into submission—temporary submission—strength and spirit die out under a flogging, but the scars remain and are remembered. According to a French paper the unhappy peasant rebels at Voronege were beaten with green switches upon which lateral branches remained; these implements of torture cut deeply and filled the wounds with splinters. Strong men fainted under the punishment and were carried away dripping with blood. An officer who protested at the revolting cruelty of his superiors was put under arrest for three days. Shortly after the peasants held a *Te Deum* service on their place of torture; the authorities had supposed it was a sign of submission, but too late discovered their victims were praying they might never forget the spot on which their blood had fallen. They revolted again and drove out the soldiers

from their village. A new regiment has had to be quartered upon them and the district is still unquered.

Nor are labor troubles over, although rigid press censorship retards the rapid spread of ill news. The Governor of Moscow, Grand Duke Serge, dared not leave his post to pay his respects to Loubet during his late visit to the Tsar. To sum up, fresh taxes are to be imposed on all the districts whose landed proprietors had their estates pillaged by the starving peasantry. If first to be starved, then flogged and taxed, is not a first-class recipe for rebel-making, we don't know what is.

Correspondents to Russia are warned that extra postal precautions are being taken, and that a special department for the examination of telegrams or letters sent to or received from other countries is to be organised in every postoffice.

FOR FREE SPEECH.

An Appeal.

Readers of *Reynolds' Newspaper* (May 25th), *Labour Leader*, etc., will have noticed that an appeal to all lovers of free speech and justice has been made by our provincial comrades on behalf of W. MacQueen, who, with John Most, was arrested in the course of a public meeting held in the New Irving Hall, New York, on Sunday night, May 4th. Early this year Comrade MacQueen left England in the hope of improving his condition as compositor in the United States and of doing propaganda. Unfortunately he has found it difficult to get steady work, as through lack of sufficient backing, being a new man in the States, and probably because of his bold stand for Anarchism and free speech, he has so far not been admitted into the Typo. Union. Last month we stated he had issued and was editing *Liberty*, a monthly Anarchist paper in English, which was a long felt want in New York, and he attended numerous meetings as a courageous speaker and propagandist, in spite of the warning screams of the American Eagle, which with one talon gripping at English commerce, was yet not too busy to strike with the other at the English workman who gripped at liberty of speech in the United States. On May 4th, MacQueen attended a meeting called to protest against the refusal of the Courts to admit Most's plea against his sentence of a year's imprisonment for inserting a reprint of another writer's article upon Anarchism in *Freiheit*. The article had appeared more than once without comment, but its insertion during the week McKinley was at Buffalo led the authorities to arrest him upon the latter's death. The audience was a large one of some thousands, composed mainly of Socialists, Trades Unionists and Anarchists. Most and MacQueen had each spoken and met at the door of the hall for a breath of air when they were covered with police revolvers and arrested. A young man, called Heller, who protested at the arrests was himself escorted to the station.

They were kept in the cells that night, were refused water to wash themselves in the morning and given no breakfast. It was supposed they had been arrested under the new Anti-Anarchist laws just passed by the New York and New Jersey State Legislatures against the public propagation of Anarchism. But neither the police nor magistrates knew how to proceed or deal with the points raised at the preliminary hearing. Consequently our comrades were released on bail for a few days while the matter was investigated. The second, perhaps the final hearing of the case, must by this date have taken place. It is not likely that either justice or mercy, as Anarchists, will be shown our comrades. As the first offenders under the new State Anti-Anarchist law, the judge will inflict a heavy fine or a term of imprisonment long enough in his legal mind to terrify all future aspirants or upholders of free speech in New York City.

In the States, as now in England, there is no longer any "public opinion"—there is only "Press opinion," and every judge and public prosecutor knows that the journalists throughout the country stand beside those who fling an Anarchist behind the bars. The United States, in the height of its ambition and power, has taken the first step that leads to the downfall of every State—it begins to trample upon the rights and liberties of free men. The American Government, like the rest of them, seems to have learnt nothing from history. Repression will bring them the same evils that it brings to the despotisms of Europe, and Anarchism will live through it all. If they prefer secret societies to free speech they are going the right way to get them.

A MacQueen Defence Fund has been opened in New York and at home, to which we cordially invite the co-operation of all readers of *Freedom*, as a protest against the arbitrary proceedings now taking place in America, and as a proof of our solidarity with a good comrade, who has sacrificed much for the cause.

Contributions received by Dr. Solatoroff, care of 69, Gold Street, New York; A. Barton, 70 Kirkstone Road, Hillsbro', Sheffield, England; H. Stockton, 39, Hammerton Road, Langsett Road, Sheffield; *Freedom Office*, 127, Ossulston Street, Euston Road, London.

MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN.

[A sketch of the French Penal Colony of New Caledonia, condensed from *In an unknown Prison Land*, by G. Griffiths.]

There are not many portions of the sea-realm of Oceania of which the name is so well known as New Caledonia. Throughout Europe it has for fifty years been the name of a convict station. To

the *forçat* and the *relégué* its name means even something worse than the traditions of the old galleys could tell of. It meant banishment over an illimitable stretch of ocean, and, to the French criminal caged in the penal transport, it was the Land of the Chain, of the Lash and the Guillotine, a hell upon earth, a paradise of Nature transformed by despotism into an inferno of crime and cruelty. In earlier times it really was like something what the *evadés*, who had reached Australia through a thousand miles of sea-peril and starvation, described it to be. All this has long ago been done away with, but even now the commandants of the various camps are careful to remind the visitor that not the least part of the punishment of transportation to New Caledonia consists in the fact of banishment for many years, perhaps for ever, from France.

In New Caledonia there are three classes into which the criminal population is rigidly divided. First, there is the *forçat*, or convict proper, the man who has been sentenced to a definite term of transportation, ranging from eight years to life. The second class is composed of *relégués*, who have been banished for life, not for any particular crime, but because by an accumulation of offences they have proved themselves incapable of bearing the burden of responsibility which is inseparable from freedom. The third class is composed of the *libérés*. The nearest English analogue to him is the convict released on license, but the only real likeness between them is the fact that they are both responsible for their movements to the police. In New Caledonia the *forçat* may become a *concessionnaire*, and after that a *libéré*, or he may become first a collective and then an individual *libéré*. In the former case he is free to hire himself out for work during the day, but he must return to sleep in barracks. In the latter he is absolutely free within the limits of the colony. Subject to the sanction of the Administration he may engage in any business he pleases. Many men in this class have done well for themselves; others have returned to France under government sanction to present their petition for "rehabilitation." If this is granted they become freemen, their civil rights are restored to them, and they can either settle down in France or return to the colony. The *relégué* has no such hope. He is banished for life and remains a well-cared-for slave of the government for the rest of his days. In some rare cases he may regain his freedom as a special act of grace, but his civil rights are never restored to him.

This is what I saw of convict life in Noumea before I had passed the prison gates for the first time. I had eaten my second dinner at the Cercle when ——— said:—

"The convict-band is playing in the square to night, suppose we go and get some seats."

"The convict what?" I said, harking back mentally to the rigid English system, and trying to picture to myself an English convict blowing a cornet.

"It's what they call here the Musique de la Transportation. I don't suppose there's anything like it anywhere else."

Presently up one of the avenues there appeared a line of grey-clad figures carrying musical instruments. There were twenty-five all told. They sauntered up to the band-stand laughing and chatting, guarded by a very bored-looking *surveillant*, who carried in a sling a revolver which he was not allowed to use unless one of his charges struck him first.

When the performance was over the artists shuffled into a sort of double line. The weary warder counted them and gave the order to march. No one even turned to look at them, and I who had seen a party of English convicts on their way to work through a public road, ranged up with their faces to the wall because a break-load of excursionists was passing by, wondered greatly. Now, however, the band is a thing of the past. One night having collected more surreptitious coppers than usual, they halted on their way to barracks, bought wine and brandy and told the warder to report them if he dared. He did dare, and the next day the Director of the Administration published a brief edict which abolished them as musicians for ever.

When my credentials from the Minister of the Colonies had been countersigned by the Governor of New Caledonia, and he had written a letter to the Director of Administration, I went to the Direction. In a few minutes I was sitting in a half-darkened, comfortable room, with double doors through which no sound could penetrate. This room is the centre of the system which controls the destinies of bound and free throughout New Caledonia. On the other side of an ample writing table sat a square-headed, strong-jawed man of about five-and-thirty. This was the Director of the Penitentiary Administration for New Caledonia and Dependencies. He is supreme chief of an army of commandants, surveillants and jailors, whose duty it is to keep watch and ward over between ten or twelve thousand convicts, *relégués* and *libérés*. He is absolutely independent of the Governor, who cannot even employ convicts on public works without his permission. He is responsible to no one but the Minister of the Colonies and the President of the Republic, who are many a long thousand miles away. He gave me special passes authorising me to inspect all the prisons and camps *en détail*—which is a very different thing to the rarely bestowed visitor's pass. He was as much surprised when I told him that the cat and the birch were still used in English prisons, that English prisoners ate and slept in solitude and worked in silence, as I was when he told me that not only had all corporal punishment been abolished in New Caledonia, but that the surveillants were not permitted to lay a hand upon a prisoner except in self-defence, that cells and silence were only used as punishments, and that the better-behaved prisoners might smoke and drink wine.

I had seen hundreds of convicts in England working within and without the prison walls, in grim, joyless silence, surrounded by equally silent, rifle-armed warders, and never a prisoner moving without one of these at his heels. Here it was difficult to believe I was in prison-land at all save that those around me were wearing two different uniforms. The surveillants were dressed in spotless white, the convicts in light grey canvas cloth with a broad-brimmed hat. A good many of them were smoking, and this rather got on my nerves, for I kept on asking myself what would happen to an English prison official if he saw a convict take out a cigarette and ask another for a light? At the same time there was no lack of discipline, though not what we should call such in England. Still, the convicts worked harder than I have ever seen English convicts work.

Arrived at Ile Nou, I found it a very pleasant little settlement, composed of white houses and shady streets at the foot of a hill on which the great prison buildings stand. The Commandant, a mild-mannered, grey-haired gentleman, ordered the carriage to be got ready. We got in and went at a good pace up the winding road, until our convict driver halted in front of a big, black iron door in a long white-washed wall. As the chief surveillant put his key in the lock the Commandant said to me, with a smile, "You will be the first Englishman who has ever passed this gate."

As the door swung to, I found myself in a long rectangular courtyard, one side of which was almost filled by a row of long white buildings. After we had inspected the dormitories, where the convicts of the third, or lowest class, sleep on sloping wooden shelves, with one foot manacled to an iron bar running the whole length of the long room, we went through other gates and walls into the central prison—the Prison Cellulaire—the heart and centre of the vast organisation.

Here I might have fancied myself in a somewhat old-fashioned English prison. Here there were no convicts smoking or chatting at their work. The chill of silence cut down through the warmth of the tropic morning as the iron gates clashed to, and the heavy bolts shot back. Under foot, black stone pavement; around, white walls and two tiers of little black doors. On the ground floor we went through several cells into which light as well as air was admitted, and here I found convicts who had been sentenced to various terms of hard labour.

This, with the reduction of diet, is the first degree of punishment inflicted on an idle or disorderly prisoner. It was about equal to the ordinary hard labour of English prisoners.

(To be continued.)

ANARCHIST COMMUNISM*: Its Aims and Principles.

[From the *Reformers' Year Book*, page 26.]

Anarchism may be briefly defined as the negation of all government and all authority of man over man: Communism as the recognition of the just claim of each to the fullest satisfaction of all his needs, physical, moral and intellectual. The Anarchist, therefore, whilst resisting as far as possible all forms of coercion and authority, repudiates just as firmly even the suggestion that he should impose himself upon others, realising as he does that this fatal propensity in the majority of mankind has been the cause of nearly all the misery and bloodshed in the world. He understands just as clearly that to satisfy his needs without contributing, to the best of his ability, his share of labor in maintaining the general well-being, would be to live at the expense of others—to become an exploiter and to live as the rich drones live today. Obviously, then, government on the one hand and private ownership of the means of production on the other, complete the vicious circle—the present social system—which keeps mankind degraded and enslaved.

There will be no need to justify the Anarchists' attack upon all forms of government: history teaches the lesson he has learned on every page. But that lesson being concealed from the mass of the people by interested advocates of "law and order," and even by many Social Democrats, the Anarchist deals his hardest blows at the sophisms that uphold the State, and urges workers in striving for their emancipation to confine their efforts to the economic field.

It follows, therefore, that politically and economically his attitude is purely revolutionary; and hence arises the vilification and misrepresentation that Anarchism, which denounces all forms of social injustice, meets with in the press and from public speakers.

Rightly conceived, Anarchism is no mere abstract ideal theory of human society. It views life and social relations with eyes disillusioned. Making an end of all superstitions, prejudices and false sentiments it tries to see things as they really are; and without building castles in the air it finds by the simple correlation of established facts that the grandest possibilities of a full and free life can be placed within the reach of all, once that monstrous bulwark of all our social iniquities—the State—has been destroyed, and common property declared.

By education, by free organisation, by individual and associated resistance to political and economic tyranny, the Anarchist

hopes to achieve his aims. The task may seem impossible to many, but it should be remembered that in science, in literature, in art, the highest minds are with the Anarchists or are imbued with distinct Anarchist tendencies. Even our bitterest opponents admit the beauty of our "dream," and reluctantly confess it would be well for humanity if it were "possible." Anarchist Communist propaganda is the intelligent, organised, determined effort to realise the "dream" and to ensure that freedom and well-being for all *shall* be possible.

* It would be only fair to state that the Individualist school of Anarchism, which includes many eminent writers and thinkers, differs from us mainly on the question of Communism, i.e., on the holding of property, the remuneration of labor, etc. Anarchism, however, affords the opportunity for experiment in all these matters, and in that sense there is no dispute between us. We have purposely refrained from alluding to the burning question of assassination, as we think it will be time to deal with that when government has explained to us all the moral advantages of its wholesale massacres, slaughtering and plundering.

CHRISTIANITY and SOCIALISM DIVORCED.

[From *The Torch of Reason*, Oregon, U.S.A.]

There has been a singular coquettement between Christianity and Socialism. But the Pope, and hence Archbishop Corrigan, Bishop Quigley (Buffalo) and all the smaller guns are blazing away against Socialism. They send as good as they get and their replies are thoughtful material for Liberals, as this specimen from *The Worker*, of March 30, shows:

"Every appeal to men to become Socialists in the name of Christianity will result in the corruption and betrayal of Socialism in the end, and in the use of the movement for private ends. People cannot separate Christ from Christianity. And Christianity today stands for what is lowest and basest in life. The church of today sounds the lowest note in human life. It is the most degrading of all our institutions, and the most brutalising in its effect on the common life. The church is simply organised Christianity. For Socialism to use it, to make terms with it, or to let it make approaches to the Socialist movement is for Socialism to take Judas to its bosom. There is not an instance, in sixteen centuries, in which the church has not betrayed every movement for human emancipation it has touched. Official religion and militarism are the two guardians of capitalism, and the subtle methods of the church in destroying the manhood of the soul and keeping it servile, are infinitely more to be dreaded by the Socialist movement than the world's standing armies."

THE CRIMES OF THE CAPITALIST.

While governments are busy with their Anti-Anarchist laws and while the friends of humanity are being persecuted and imprisoned, even bayoneted and shot because of their attacks on the capitalists and their system, it is well we should be able to show how both governments and capitalists stand condemned out of their own mouths by the publication of the reports of their own experts on dangerous trades.

Thirty-seven specialists take 900 pages to draw up this indictment against our present industrial system. The title of the book is "Dangerous Trades: the Historical, Social and Legal Aspects of Industrial Occupations as Affecting Health;" but it might more accurately be entitled: "A Cyclopædia of Capitalists Crime and Cruelty." One shudders at the mere list of trades and occupations that are "dangerous" to health—destructive of life, we should say. Here are a few: The lead, iron and steel industries, the manufacture of china, earthenware, matches, spirits, paints, indiarubber, etc., etc. When one considers the importance and extent of these trades and the numbers that must be employed in them, one can imagine how thickly this industrial battlefield must be strewn with "killed and wounded." Besides this, there is also a list of diseases engendered by stagnant air, concussion of the air, the inhalation of dust, and excessively repeated muscular action, all of which are sufferings that might be saved if it did not pay the capitalist better to let the workers suffer.

We are in the habit of congratulating ourselves on the vast improvement that has taken place in the general condition of mines, factories and workshops since the beginning of last century. Undoubtedly some terrible evils have been abolished, thanks, not to the government, but the rousing of public opinion by those philanthropic spirits whose untiring efforts were opposed at every point by the capitalist class. But one thing was not abolished and that was the capitalist. He remained to curse mankind more and more as his power increased; and no sooner was he checked in one place than he broke out in another, and disguised as he always is as a benefactor of his kind, he rises up continually with new terrors for those whose lives and suffer-

ings build him his fortunes. The mines may be improved now, but a hundred years ago there was not the railway system claiming its 17,000 or more victims annually. There was not the strain in those days that machinery has thrown on the workers at the present time. No doubt there were other hardships. But, if they have gone, they have been replaced by muscle and nerve-destroying processes such as the generation of electricity and the manufacture of acetylene.

We will quote one example of women's work and ask if there is much to choose between this and the mines and factories of a hundred years ago. It is the description of a "pickler's assistant" at a tin plate works:

The girls work in gangs under the man who has the contract for cleaning the plates in dilute sulphuric acid. Their work is to lade and unlade the cradles in which the plates, placed in racks, are lowered by the pickler into the steaming tanks of acid. Backwards and forwards the girls move with armfuls of plates, carrying each time weights of thirty pounds and upwards, first filling the racks and then removing from them the wet plates fresh from the tanks. The clothing of the girls becomes saturated. It is not only their health that suffers; the girls are "soaked through to the skin," as they say, not with plain water, but with the "pickle," which rapidly destroys both their upper and under garments, and also the leather of their boots and clogs.

What shall we say of this after a hundred years of Factory legislation? What shall we say of a parliament whose meddling seems to make things worse rather than better? If we were not already Anarchists, would not this destroy all faith in the theories of State control of industries? Mr. H. I. Tennant, M.P., who contributes a chapter to this volume on "The Principles of Protective Legislation," considers the workers as needing positive protection against harsh treatment, fraud, accident, and poisoning—a list of crimes charged against the capitalist which sounds like an extract from the *Newgate Calendar*. We should imagine that an ordinary decent-minded person who had not been debauched by the present system would say after this that what the worker needs is to be able to work without being a wage-earner; or in other words, not to be at the mercy of the capitalist—that is, in reality, to be a producer in a Socialist society.

Take again the women workers in laundries. Here machinery has been introduced to an immense extent; but whilst helping considerably to fill the pocket of the employer, it comes as a curse to the unlucky women whose bread depends on this work. We are told how scores of girls under eighteen—the future mothers of an "imperial race"—can be found in one establishment employed as machine-minders in a terrible atmosphere, the high temperature of which is rendered more destructive to health by the moisture arising from the machines and the damp clothes. In a word, the conditions are as bad as in a spinning mill with very much longer hours.

One other conclusion, arrived at by Mrs. Tennant in her chapter on the effect of factory work on infant mortality, must be noticed, partly because society blunders on without knowing, and often without even caring to know, the causes of the evils with which it finds itself surrounded, and partly because being as it were only an indirect result of the capitalist system the employer escapes the actual responsibility of this terrible crime against humanity. If it is true that during the cotton famine, during the slackness of trade in Coventry in 1861, and even during the siege of Paris infant mortality *decreased* owing to the fact that the mothers, though short of food, could give their loving care to the children because of being out of work—if all this is true, is there another nail needed to drive into the coffin of capitalism?

In reviewing this work the *Daily Chronicle* observes: "The calmest and most contemplative citizen can hardly read this encyclopædia of industrial misery without being awakened to the need for action. We are constantly surrounded by blessings of civilisation that have come to us only with the loss of the lives and health and eyesight and intellect of the producers." Just so; and it is reasonable even for Anarchists to add after this that a society responsible for all this is an enemy to mankind and should be abolished without delay to make room for a better. Instead of any serious thought being given to the subject, however, "society" is busily engaged in preparing a hideous poppy-show coronation with the patriotic capitalist preparing to make huge profits from the sale of seats, and the workers, oblivious of the fact that they are paying for it, thinking that after all they wouldn't mind dear bread if they could have a coronation once a year, to make it good for trade. After the coronation their apathetic minds will begin to awaken to the realities of their economic position under a capitalist system that maims, murders, robs and deludes them at every turn.

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