

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM

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MONTHLY; ONE PENNY

THE FIRST OF MAY.

As year after year the First of May comes round, some attempt is generally made to estimate what progress has been achieved in the struggle for the emancipation of Labour. As the bourgeois are given to assessing their gains and losses—that is to say, their crimes of exploitation—at the end of the year, so Labour has found in this one day a moment when it has been possible to gather together to discuss the causes of failures in the past as well as its successes, to look the present situation squarely in the face, and to cheer the comrades with the hopes for the future.

Such things have been possible, we say. Nay, even more. For some strikes that have become historical, some demonstrations that have given cause for alarm to the ruling classes, have originated on this day that Labour has come to regard as its own. But for years past, at least in England, the claim to have its day has hardly been put forth by the workers. Certainly, organised Labour is not blind to the significance that a May Day demonstration could be made to have in the eyes of the exploiters. A hundred thousand in the Park, with proportionately large and enthusiastic gatherings in the great provincial centres, would do more to check the inroads that in recent years have been made upon the so-called “rights of Labour” than all the voting that could be done till the crack of doom.

It is no idle dream to imagine that such numbers of workers imbued with a definite aim could have been brought together. Why, then, has this not happened? Partly because of the lack of energy and initiative amongst the workers themselves, but principally because of the jerrymandering of “leaders” and political trimmers, who, instead of educating their fellows in the “definite aim” necessary to this end, have been plunging in the mire of Parliamentary intrigue to prepare for the day when *they* shall make the laws for us to obey, when they, secure in their positions of political power and corrupt to the core, will be looking down on the “mob” who will be demonstrating, vainly enough, to keep them to their promises. That is the dream of the leaders, and we can see, at least in one instance, the consequences of this dream being realised.

So that the workers will not come in their thousands to inaugurate, by direct action, the certainty of an eight-hour day. That would be too drastic for the “respectabilities” of the Labour movement. Nor will they advocate the same means for the restoring of the land to the people, although they know well enough that if those who vote for “land reform” would take the risk of becoming “land grabbers” *en masse*, the feudalism that still curses England to-day would be dead in a year. Instead of this, they are compromising with the rascals—landowners themselves—who are making a pretence of “dealing with the question.” They would have their dupes believe that Beelzebub will cast out Beelzebub.

One other thing we especially look for in the demonstrations of the First of May, and no doubt the matter will be referred to in pious resolutions, as a mere result of habit. We speak of that most vital necessity of the present moment—the international solidarity of Labour. At any moment we may be thrown into antagonism with another country—with Germany, for instance—and brought to the brink of war. What steps are being taken by the “Labour leaders” to ensure that the 3,000,000 who voted for Social Democracy in that country shall not be at a death struggle with the 2,000,000 Trade Unionists of England? So far as recent events are concerned, international solidarity has received a shameful blow by the blacklegging that England has been guilty of; and Trade Unionists are tainted with it, and the “leaders” have disgraced themselves by their indifference. How can we send “fraternal greetings” on Labour Day to the poor wage-slaves of Germany whose cause we have outraged? Are these the tactics by which we are to conquer the future?

Is capitalism so easily vanquished that we can afford to betray our own principles in the face of all we see around us?

Let us be frank and confess that the May Day of 1907 will bring to our minds the needful propaganda that has been neglected, and the mistaken path that has been followed by those who have turned their backs on the Revolution.

But the solidarity of Labour will grow, in spite of all the treacheries and desertions—in spite of all the reactionary tactics of Social Democrats and “Labour leaders.” It will grow, because if there is one thing more certain than another it is that the future is with those who remain true to the economic struggle, and in this struggle solidarity is the key to all conquests over capitalist oppression. Even as we write, France is proving to the world of Labour how direct action can strike at the very vitals of the exploiting classes, and can leave them impotent even in the midst of their wealth. And solidarity grows with the knowledge of the power Labour possesses when, untrammelled by political formulas and legal hypocrisies, it lays the axe to the root of the evils, the abuses, the petty tyrannies that are inflicted on the workers in the name of “law and order.”

Starvation, unemployment, hopeless misery, all the thousand and one iniquities of the present system are as rife this May Day as they were on the last. All the fine speeches that have been made in Parliament, all the money expended in supporting the “representatives” of Labour, all the energy wasted on electioneering, have not reduced by a fraction the sum of human suffering that capitalism inflicts on humanity. Men, women, children still die of starvation or take their lives in despair through lack of work. The toll of killed and wounded demanded by the industrialism of the present day does not decrease. Is it not time some steps were taken to end the folly of the misleaders—to bring the workers to see some gleam of hope in a new direction? That is the question all honest workers should be asking themselves on a Labour Day that does not arouse enough enthusiasm in their breasts to impel them to sacrifice a day's work. It is a mockery to talk of “celebrating” May Day in the present condition of advanced movements in England. When the scales fall from the eyes of those who are pinned to a blind faith in leaders and politicians, then will be the time to celebrate with enthusiasm a May Day that may mean the beginning of the end of human subjection.

NO MASTER.

Saith man to man, We've heard and known
That we no master need
To live upon this earth, our own,
In fair and manly deed;
The grief of slaves long passed away
For us hath forged the chain,
Till now each worker's patient day
Builds up the House of Pain.

And we, shall we too crouch and quail,
Ashamed, afraid of strife;
And, lest our lives untimely fail,
Embrace the death in life?
Nay, cry aloud and have no fear;
We few against the world;
Awake, arise, the hope we bear
Against the curse is hurl'd.

It grows, it grows: are we the same,
The feeble band, the few?
Or what are these with eyes aflame,
And hands to deal and do?
This is the host that bears the word,
No MASTER, HIGH OR LOW,
A lightning flame, a shearing sword,
A storm to overthrow.

—WILLIAM MORRIS.

THE ANGEL.

The Ruler of Destiny sat upon the throne of the Universe. Behind him shone the vault of celestial blue. Around him a sparkling radiance streamed into the infinite. Before him moved the innumerable hosts, their flashing wings diminishing into uttermost space, till they glittered as a wilderness of stars.

To the Throne of Glory approached a hideous Thing,—a thing more grisly than Death. Its dull eyes gazed with leaden stare, its bloated lips hung livid and festering; flies buzzed out of its mouth, and it whispered hoarsely, with carrion breath: "I am War."

"Take this," said the Eternal One, flinging to the Thing of Horror a suit of golden armour, brilliant as the sun itself. "It will be many ages before men discover what is within." And the loathsome Thing surrounded itself with the golden armour and precipitated itself downward, through the ethereal abysses, to the earth.

An Angel, pure as the morning, and stately as a pillar of crystal, with fearless eyes, wide and clear as heaven, approached the throne, and in a voice that was like the music of all music, she said: "I am Truth." "Wear this," said the Great Ruler, giving to her a sad-coloured robe. "Not for many ages will men discover what is within." And Truth also floated downward through the starry labyrinths to the earth.

She visited the editorial rooms of *Lucifer*, the Great Daily. When the Editor-in-Chief saw her, he shut his door in her face. The Managing Editor pushed her out of his room, and discharged the door-keeper for letting her in. The Society Editor, the Sunday Editor, the News Editor, the Sporting Editor, and the City Editor joined in hustling her roughly to the stairway. The cub reporters pelted her with cigarette stubs, and when a final push sent her stumbling down the stairs, there were peals of laughter.

She went to the editorial rooms of the Great Daily, the *Epoch*, whose motto, badly blurred, on the front page was: "By Truth Victorious." She entered the room of the Editor-in-Chief. He turned pale when he saw her, for he had once known her. "How did you get in here?" he whispered. "How did you pass the business office? Don't you know they have forbidden you to come here? For God's sake, leave me. You will be my ruin." His voice shook, and he pushed her out and bolted the door.

She went sadly down and out into the street, and joined a stream of men going into a great hall. The galleries were filled with men and women. At one end of the hall was a stage where many men were seated, and there was one who was talking loudly, so that the veins in his neck swelled and his face was purple. He was saying: "The salvation of the country is in the Republican Party. Truth is mighty and will prevail." "There, beside my disciple, is my place," said she, and she stepped from the platform and stood beside the orator. He continued bellowing, and finally said: "A government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." But Truth, standing beside him, called in a clear, trumpet-like voice: "A government of the people? Yes, always; by property and power. A government by the people? Never! The people cannot govern the people. A government for the people? Never! Government has always been, and always will be, for the few. No man has the right, and no body of men have the right, to govern any peaceable fellow-being."

"Put her out," shrieked the orator. "Put her out!" they shouted from the floor. "Put her out!" they called from the gallery. The orator pushed her into the arms of a policeman, and the policeman threw her into the street, and the door was closed against her.

A rabble of ragged ones, with hollow cheeks and hollow eyes, poor and wretched and ignorant, followed her and jeered at her. Dejected, she wandered about the streets till presently she came to another large hall, filled with people, and entering, she heard an orator saying: "The salvation of the country is the Democratic Party. Truth is mighty and will prevail." "Ah!" sighed Truth, "that man I am sure will know me." She went forward and stood beside him. "That government is best which governs least," shouted the orator. "That is true," called Truth, and her voice rang from wall to wall and from rafter to rafter, like the notes of a trumpet. "Freedom is best. Government is wrong. All the laws which take the property of men against their will, or give to a few that which belongs to all, are wrong." "Stop her!" said one of the men on the platform. "If she says anything that means anything,

it will ruin us." "Stop her!" said the orator; "she will lose us votes." "Put her out," yelled the convention. "Put her out!" shrieked the gallery. Amid hoots and hisses she was hurried out, and the convention went on noisily—saying nothing.

Then Truth went and sat under the stars, and watched the procession of their glorious march, and she yearned for the celestial pathways.

When once more the sun had baptised the earth, she heard bells ringing, and again she walked through the city. Men and women were hastening towards a temple. "Where are you going?" she asked; and they answered: "To hear the truth." "Then will I go with you," she said; and she went into a building with bare walls, where people sat silent, until presently they sang a melancholy tune. Afterwards a tall, sad man, in sad clothes, arose and said that pleasure was sinful, and to be glad on this especial day was abominably wicked, for it was the Lord's day, set apart to be a terror to the people, and wholly gloomy and joyless. Then all who were present thanked God that they were not as other men were, and prayed God that the eyes of the others might be opened, so that they too might look miserable. And they took counsel among themselves, and said: "Let us pass a law to make all others good, as we are good." Then Truth stood up and said: "O blind and foolish ones! I am Truth," but every one looked at her astonished that she should speak, and an old gentleman whispered to her that she could not speak in that place, and he led her out.

She went into the greatest temple of all, where were candles and music and much brilliancy and the smell of incense, and the priest, covered with robes, went up into the canopied pulpit and cried aloud: "Truth is deposited only with Holy Church. All others are in outer darkness." Then Truth stood up and called aloud again: "Not so; for I am Truth." The congregation started to lay hands on her. "Do not touch her," said the priest. "Poor thing, she is crazy; do not believe what she says. Truth dwells with us alone."

At last, slowly and sadly, Truth went to a great stone building, whose iron gates were locked and windows barred, yet was it full to overflowing. "This is the jail," said a little child to her, "where the wicked and the vile are." Truth entered into the darkest dungeon of the place, and beheld a young man lying there, in prison and deserted. A light filled the place as Truth touched him and said gently: "Arise, my son"; and the young man looked eagerly at her, and arose joyously, saying: "You are Truth. Oh, I have so earnestly tried to see you, and now you will kiss me before I die." "When do you die?" she said, sorrowfully; "and why?" "I die to-morrow," said he, "because I have followed you and clutched at your robe. I have stood upon the corner of the street and said no man ought to command his brother; that the greatest truth is to so love one another as to give to each peaceable one the right to do as seems best to himself. I have said that any forcible government of man by man is wrong." "And for this do you die?" she whispered. "Yes, at sunrise." Then Truth lifted her hands and streaming eyes heavenward, and sighed: "One more." And she laid her hand upon the young man, and said: "I will be with you even unto death."

When the morning came she embraced the young man and kissed him, and he walked to his death with a smiling face, so that men wondered, and in his eyes was a great light. And Truth sat upon the gallows steps, and drew her sad-coloured robe over her head.

Presently there was the sound of much shouting and hurraing. Flags and wreaths filled the air, and flowers fell into the street. People clambered upon the gallows to see the better, and between the shouting throngs came a horseman in a shining suit of glittering golden armour, with a chaplet of laurel on its casque, and the people prostrated themselves and shouted exultantly, till they were hoarse. Long lines of soldiers followed after the golden horseman. They pushed the people to the right and to the left, and smote them, and the people knelt and kissed the feet of the soldiers, and a flag was carried past, and the people went mad at the sight of it, and shouted "Glory!" and the soldiers pushed them back and struck them the more. Of all that were there, only Truth saw the loathsome Thing which was within the golden armour.

When all had passed and the sound of hurraing died faintly in the distance, Truth took down the swinging body from the gallows, and she wrapped it in her own mantle and held it in her arms, as a mother holds her babe, and she looked again with streaming eyes up into the starry pathways, and cried: "How long, O Lord! how long?"

—FRANCIS DU BOSQUE, in *Liberty*.

BIG THIEVES AND LITTLE THIEVES.

(From *Temps Nouveaux*.)

The lawyer, knowing the uselessness of saying anything, watched his client with a tranquil smile. The examining magistrate, with a rapt air, listened, drinking in to the full the stormy eloquence as the accused spoke.

He was a magnificent athlete, who carried his fifty years as an Atlas might carry the world. His massive and haughty visage, framed in a large white beard, had a solidity about it as of an old Neptune seated at the prow of his vessel, while the deafening tones that broke from under his ruffled moustache, added to the glitter of his tyrannical eyes, made it impossible not to feel his force.

The act of which he was accused manifested the same also. He had ruined some hundred thousand persons—confiding fools whose savings he had embarked in questionable ventures. They were to dig canals, establish shops, renew machinery, prolong railroads, create ports, centralise industries, vanquish competition, protect national production. The ventures were so numerous that the funds collapsed, the tills grew void, and finally the creditors, heavy-eyed, with gaping beaks and ruffled feathers, swarmed upon the strong boxes—to find them a dry desert.

The memory of these things did not seem to crush the accused as he faced the charge.

"*Monsieur le juge*," he clamoured, "we know each other; I have seen you at my *soirées*!" (The judge never winced; no doubt he foresaw the end of the game.) "You know whether I am an honest man. You know my sole interest has been the welfare of my workmen, the prosperity of my clients, the glory of my country!"

The examining magistrate and lawyer looked at each other approvingly. Modern augurs, more subtle than the ancient, they could do this without laughing.

"Must one, owing to a temporary crisis," continued the money-monger, "compromise admirable enterprises which foreigners will tear from us to-morrow? Must one drive the inexperienced and unskilful into desperation, whom to-day ruins, but whom to-morrow will enrich anew? Public interest, private interest, give the answer.... Or must one by premature revelations bring the powers that be into ridicule, those (I say it advisedly) who were the first to sanction my efforts, to hope for wealth, to await prestige?"

He spoke so loudly that the judge grew somewhat uneasy. Softly as a mouse he rose and assured himself of the security of the doors and curtains. As he returned and opened his mouth to speak the speculator closed it for him with a new argument.

"And besides, what are the precise charges against me? My negotiations with Parliament and the press—deputies and journalists will certify to their sincerity. My personal fortune—I will sacrifice it (if necessary) to the last penny, rather than see behind me the face of a single man who can reproach me with causing his misery!"

He appeared moved. The two wings of his beard floated back. His nostrils dilated. His eyes, like those of a cat seen crosswise, glittered yet were unfathomable. The lawyer, from the corner of his crimson armchair, admired this countenance, moulded by artifice and life. The judge, from the traditional shadows of his rosewood desk, played carelessly with a white paper-cutter.

"And then," continued the accused (was it defiance or a feint?)—"and then.... I have influence.... certain influence."

He was silent. The silence deepened. The paper-cutter fell. Not one of the three faces was any longer sincere.

"And I," said the judge in reply with indefinable irony, "I have instructions. The order of *non-lieu* (no case) will be signed to-night."

* * * * *

His advocate thanked, the great man left the Palais, mentioning he thought of going towards the Bourse. A man of the world and desiring some information on financial matters, his judge accompanied him. (Nothing should come in the way of business.) At the corner of a street a picturesque block of carriages barred their way. By-standers were bustling around a dray, a half-overturned omnibus, and a fallen horse. As the speculator, joking with the magistrate, amused himself by watching the scene, he felt a hand slip into the back pocket of his coat.

The sky was a clear blue, the trees swayed beneath the tender light of new leaves that seemed formed from the azure, a near-by church pointing heavenward seemed to bless all. When the hand inside his pocket had reached and seized his pocket-book, the financier turned round sharply and caught it.

A wretched-looking man, clothed in tatters, struggled in vain. He had a ragged beard, cheeks so sunken as to show the bone, grey hair, and weary eyes under red lids. He gazed at the ground, thinking probably of his hovel, of prisons, of dogs who wallowed at liberty among refuse heaps. His dirt-encrusted fingers still clutched the purse. He offered it back.

"No," said the handler of bullion good naturedly, "come instead with me."

"But—" objected the judge, incredulous.

"Leave it to me," smiled the speculator.

They resumed their walk—towards the Palais—two with assured

and tranquil steps to fulfil a social duty; the third, to endure it, dragging resigned and slipshod feet.

They quickly reached the gates—whose guardians, whom little can astonish, manifested, however, some surprise to note this bundle of rags pacing between two such nobly attired gentlemen; as quickly the marble staircase was ascended, the sonorous hall traversed in which the advocates air their sleeves, their lungs and their eloquence; and as quickly reached the requisite *commissaire*.

A functionary in black, with silver buttons, received them with profound bows.

"I bring you a man who tried to rob me of my pocket-book," said the financier.

The judge observed him; he was forced to admire the serio-comic expression of his physiognomy. The *commissaire* opened his blotting-pad. The culprit had removed his cap; at a glance one saw the skull of the born criminal.

Volubly the inquisitor dragged the whole of his poor life from him: his civil status, domicile, profession, antecedents, his secret and public acts—all were known. The thief replied in a sad and mechanical manner. Yes, he had already been convicted; yes, he had been surprised by this gentleman *in flagrante delicto*.

"Do you press the charge?" asked the *commissaire*.

"It is not a serious one," murmured the examining magistrate, timidly.

"Certainly!" replied the speculator, without heeding him. "No society could exist where property was undervalued. . . . My friend, whom you respect, will give evidence at the trial."

"Exactly," consented the judge, who felt the duty of replying.

"Gentlemen!" began the prisoner, brokenly. . . .

"How much was there in the purse?" questioned the *commissaire*.

"Who steals an egg will steal an ox," said the acquitted speculator, sententiously, from behind his beard.

The thief opened the pocket-book.

"Forty sous," he answered.

"My millions are elsewhere," smiled the robbed one.

The *commissaire* turned his head aside for a moment. He was young and knew little. A clerk wrote peacefully. This judge was considering the theft of a purse. All but one were calm; one heart alone beat feverishly. The rich man observed his criminal with amenity. Low sobs shook the silence.

"It will be penal servitude," ventured the judge.

"I press my charge," said the financier.

"Very well," said the *commissaire*.

The papers were signed, the names registered; his head bent to his breast, the prisoner was led from the room.

ESPERANTO.

SIR,—I have been much interested in the correspondence in your journal on Esperanto, but it seems to me that none of your correspondents deals sufficiently with the main question, which is—Would it be an advantage for those who are trying to bring about a peaceful social revolution to have the means of freely communicating with each other, and by becoming mutually better known to be able to do away with some of those causes of friction which now keep us apart? The "confusion of tongues" in the old story of the Tower of Babel had for its avowed object to weaken the people by preventing them from taking counsel with each other, and well has it fulfilled its object; and the "ruling classes" with money and leisure to learn foreign languages, to visit other countries, with a common "diplomatic" language, have profited by the people's weakness and want of unity. Would not a common language for the people do away with some of this evil, and strengthen the international movement? And when such a language is put within our reach, clear, simple, and easily learned, shall we reject it because we see flaws in it? Do we refuse to live in a house because it is not a palace? Or, if we love the violin, do we refuse to learn music because we cannot afford a Stradivarius? Of course the natural languages, or at least the chief of them, have the great advantage that there is a literature written in them; but those actively engaged in the social revolution have little time to study the thoughts and doings of even the great men of past generations; their interest lies in the present, in the struggle against capitalism and militarism now going on; they want to know what their comrades in other lands are feeling and *doing*, and to help, and encourage, and warn them by telling of their own successes and failures. And they cannot do this through the capitalist press—that only gives what it deems suitable for the people to know—but it is done by an Esperantist journal, the *Internacia Socia Revuo*, as yet only three months old, described by a non-Socialist Esperantist as "not a Socialist, but an Anarchist journal."

I might enter into the defence of Esperanto and show that as it is necessary to know exactly what one wishes to say in order to say it correctly in Esperanto, it is a capital training in clearness and definiteness of thought; but I would rather close by urging your readers to examine it for themselves, to weigh the reasons for what they at first think to be flaws, and to learn from Dr. Zamenhof that the end for which he laboured, and the spirit which underlies his language, is that of "brotherhood and justice among all nations."

I am, yours faithfully,

HELEN FRYER.

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NOTES.

WAR CLOUDS.

It seems a very natural consequence of the double-dyed hypocrisy of capitalist Governments that while they are making pretence of sweet reasonableness in organising a Peace Congress, they are as a matter of fact perfectly conscious of the farce, and continue all their preparations for international blood spilling, knowing well there are still enough empty heads to be fooled by their antics. It requires, however, no great foresight to observe how the causes for wars and rebellions are accumulating as a consequence of government in all its forms. Quite independently of European entanglements, we can see how in India the smouldering fire of rebellion against British tyranny, as enforced by a Curzon and a Kitchener, is fanning itself into a flame. China also has its internal troubles, which if strongly manifested may easily give an excuse for the jackals of civilisation to pounce on its unhappy people. In short, there is no end to the possibility of bloodshed while capitalist society exists.

THE ANTIDOTE.

If we may take it as an established fact that war is, as a rule, one of the greatest throw-backs to the cause of Socialism, it is of the first importance for all Anarchists, Socialists, and the Labour Party to find the means if possible of checkmating the murderous schemes of those gold-hunting depredators called Governments, and if that is not possible, at least to take such steps as will most effectually neutralise their activities. Happily for the workers of the world, the general strike has at last shown them the power they can wield against their armed exploiters, when they have but the intelligence to use it. Almost within a single year Moscow and Paris have shown us how to paralyse our powerful enemies without being mowed down by their machine guns. We know, therefore, that by stopping means of transit, by cutting off supplies, by hindering all the activities necessary for the perpetration of their crimes, a weak nation or a subject race might be saved the horrors and unspeakable suffering that the ruthless forces of capitalism would employ to gain their ends. We talk of humanity, of brotherhood, of our respect for the liberty of others: it is the general strike that gives us the means of translating these sentiments into acts of solidarity.

A PROTEST.

Once again we make our protest against the anti-social attitude taken up by the *Clarion* over the question of our treatment of "inferior" races. We do not expect the same methods from Thompson in dealing with this subject as we would expect from the editor of the *Daily Mail*. Yet this *soi-disant* Socialist goes out of his way to print extracts from a paper published in that "land of lies" which are simply a *résumé* of outrages committed by coloured men on white girls and women. Since it is possible they are true, let us assume they are true. Then we affirm it is Thompson's duty, not as a Socialist—we will assume for the moment that he is not one—but as an "ordinary" individual, to print side by side a list of the outrages committed by white men on coloured women during the same period. He can't do this because white men don't send him details of that side of the question. We know the cases are not reported because the poor blacks cannot take them into court. It is not to be expected that people who don't allow their fellow creatures to walk on the same path, to eat at the same table, to ride in the same carriage with themselves, are going to treat them as equals in a "court of law," of all places on earth! They are black, you see, and black don't count—not even with some

"Socialists." But we all know what happens to black women in the hands of white men, only these outrages when referred to are *laughed at*. That's the truth, but it is not printed in the South African press. And does Thompson, we wonder, ever try to imagine what our coloured brothers (we are all brothers, are we not?) think of the white man's morality? Can he imagine what impression was given to the poor "savages" who were the victims of Stanley's exploits—the man who killed an old woman so that her cries should not disturb the village—the man who bought a little girl to be killed and eaten as an offering to a chief? Barbarism isn't a question of colour, as the Czar and his torturers make very evident; and if Thompson had to choose he would probably prefer black barbarism to white.

SWEATING—ENGLISH STYLE.

There is a pretty general idea amongst the people "who never will be slaves" that sweating in the East End is a curse brought to this free and glorious country by the "damned foreigner." The Sweating Exhibition gave the proud Britisher a wholesome reminder to the contrary, and just lately the *Daily News* has given prominence to a case that would break the hearts of the wealthy—if they had any hearts to break. The facts are common enough no doubt in Stepney, but they are only dragged out of the darkness of these depths of misery when the system claims a victim in a fashion that leads to an inquest. A starving mother and daughter, making trousers at 2d. a pair, couldn't earn enough to keep themselves and provide nourishment for the baby. Its death led to the discovery that these white slaves were the victims of an English sweater, and to give the last touch of infamy to the tragedy, the poor women on applying for more work after the funeral were driven from the door by the sweater, who bullied them for disclosing his name. So the great lie of civilisation—the economic lie—is passed on from high to low, till it reaches these poor victims, "who," as Carlyle reminds us, "can pass the cheat no further." We hardly know what to say to it all! Shall we cry "Rule, Britannia"?

VIVE LA GREVE GENERALE!

"The General Strike is in the air all over France," we are told by the capitalist press, and for once it tells the truth. But it is not only "in the air," it is also in the hearts and minds of the French workers, and as a means of breaking their chains will continue to spread in all trades and industries. There are troublous times in store for M. Clemenceau, but with all his intelligence, with all his knowledge of advanced movements, he will never sweep back the incoming tide of Direct Action. That is the glory of the new movement in the French Trade Unions—it cannot be circumvented by the politicians. So while Jaurès is silenced by the pitiless logic of Clemenceau, this Mephistopheles of the intellectuals can only play the bully in face of the impregnable position now held by the organised workers. France leads the way, not by precept, but by bold example. She will do again as she has done before: by inaugurating the Revolution she will enlighten the world.

REPORT.

DEAR COMRADE,—This letter is written with the object of putting the Newcastle Group in the line of march in the propagandist fight for the emancipation of the proletarian. We have now been in existence for the matter of three months, and although few in numbers, yet we are slowly but surely feeling our way towards the best action which we think will achieve the greatest results, and that is by bringing into existence a progressive library of the most advanced books upon Socialism and Anarchism in Hebrew and English. The library will be thrown open to the public at a very nominal charge per week, and from additional promises of patronage we fully trust to recruit members for our group. We have so far not given much attention to open-air propaganda in the shape of lectures, but shall do so after our library scheme has gained a footing. I may remark that P. Kropotkin's "Memoirs of a Revolutionist" commands the premier position in our future "library arsenal," and the writer of this letter has received unbounded pleasure in the reading of the book.

I was pleased to note the fact a few weeks ago in the *Voice of Labour* that Comrade Fleming, of Melbourne, is still alive and a fighting force in the ranks of Anarchism. I knew him indirectly as far back as eighteen or more years ago, full of vigour and fearless. Comrade Fleming will remember the defunct *Australian Radical*, published in Hamilton, N.S.W., and edited by W. R. Winspear, by whom your humble servant, when quite a youth, was employed composing articles in type that proved "literary bombs," and which were the commencement of the Socialist wave throughout Australia, but of which "Labour froth" has eventually been the sorry result. Comrade Fleming will also remember David A. Andrade, J. A. Andrews, and Robert Beattie. Are they still fighting? Our greetings to those men across the sea.

With the Newcastle Group's best wishes, fraternally yours,

R. STUART.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Roumania.

The agrarian revolt, of which mention was made in the last number, spread like wild-fire through the country, and was stamped out as rapidly by the methods dear to despots (especially German ones)—sheer brutal force. The full tale of the horrors perpetrated, as with those occurring daily in Russia, will probably never be known, though Time brings its own revenge and one day will assuredly retaliate. In one sense it has already avenged some wrongs, for we may be certain the half-dozen landowners and large farmers who were done to death by the famished and maddened peasants during their revolt were not such as had sympathised with their hard lot, but men who had harried them. That the revolt spread with such swiftness only proves the hour had come for it. It is quite certain by the results that King Charles had his army well in hand, and set brother against brother as only rulers can. The troops concentrated in the land numbered 120,000, and were immediately given their work. The revolt was to be crushed. They crushed it with shrapnel. "The army throughout the disturbances," wrote the Roumanian Minister in London to the press, "has shown a great spirit of devotion, and has behaved with great firmness and energy." The same spirit of devotion as is shown by all modern warriors fighting with the newest guns and rifles against unarmed, undisciplined hordes! "The reprisals have been severe," adds the Minister. (We well believe it!) This sinister admission on his part goes to prove the merciless conduct of Roumania's ruler and soldiers. This year's crops will verily rise from the blood of those humble workers, the peasants. A great deal of English bread is made from Roumanian corn. It is a thought to dwell upon. Out of several instances of military ferocity we have space for one only. An officer with a company of soldiers in marching through a village noticed a burnt barn. He made inquiries of its owner, one of the large farmers. "Yes, the villagers had done it." He named twelve. No proofs were demanded, no investigation held. Then and there these twelve hapless men were routed out, dragged before the commander, and shot dead. What sublime courage! What noble devotion to duty and sovereign! And the brother workers who shot them? Alas, are there no anti-militarists in Roumania? A land trust, it appears, has been the chief instrument in grinding down these peasants. It has already rented an area of nearly four million acres at 10 francs an acre, which are re-leased to the peasants at 20 to 30 francs an acre. It was among these poor people that Queen Elizabeth of Roumania (a petty German princess in her youth)—known better to the world as Carmen Sylva—was wont to pass when collecting folk-songs which she has since published in English. The songs are admirable—full of fire and spirit and poetic force, as are the primitive songs of the people. She supped with the peasants, spent day after day with them, rambling about the villages with her lady-in-waiting—said she loved them. But not a word from any source comes to tell whether she felt for their wrongs, or what her attitude was when the friends she "loved" were being mowed down with shrapnel. The queens of Europe have little power in these days, but they wield a mighty influence—and it needs neither courage nor parliamentary permission to cry aloud at such times, or even to whisper merely into a sympathetic ear, "I am powerless to help you, my people, but my heart bleeds for you!" But it is the same old story the world over. Sentimental sovereigns shed an easy tear over the "masses" when these wallow peaceably in their misery; but let them assert themselves as living, breathing men and women—and hey, presto! uneasy lies the head that wears a crown!

France.

The general strike arranged by the Federation of Labour for employés of the provision trades in Paris fizzled out in an aimless way, never at any moment assuming a "general" aspect. The aim had been to enforce the weekly day of rest on recalcitrant employers, and to right some other iniquities. But though the gay Parisians were threatened with famine and warned to stock their houses with victuals by the middle of April, the task to organise a general strike proved too difficult for the Federation. They had hoped to make its initiative a secret and its results as widely felt as the late electricians' strike—but the secret leaked out, and on the day the strike was to open Paris was prepared for it. But several minor strikes among separate branches of the provision trades have taken place. Some of the lesser groceries lost their employés for a few hours or days and came to terms—so far as promises go. The same with the bakers. But the sharpest and best fight was that of the café and restaurant waiters, and these have succeeded in gaining many concessions. They frequently stormed the cafés in order to bring out men who had failed to join their ranks, and there were numerous collisions with the police and municipal guard, but no great damage was done except to chairs and crockery, and the chief demands were speedily won. As for the justice of these, nothing requires to be said. Waiters are on duty for fifteen to eighteen hours at a stretch each day. At some of the restaurants they have to bear the expense of letter-paper, ink, matches, newspapers (illustrated and otherwise); while at all, 3, 4, or 5 per cent. on the total of their takings are taken from them. They live, in fact, on that demoralising factor—the tip. Another comforting concession is the right to wear moustaches. The restaurateurs have dealt directly with their men, refusing to negotiate with the Federation. But that its members should get their just demands is all the latter asks for; slights and insults do not affect its stability.

Russia.

Conditions have altered little since the year began. Horrors bristle on all sides, just as they have done since Balmasheff fired the shot that started the Great Revolt,—for revolution in the strict sense of the word the Russian movement is not. Balmasheff gave up his life for the cause on May 16, 1902, just five years ago. For five years the forces of repression have been at work striving to stamp out the rebellious spirit of an awakening people, and to chain that people down again into slavish submission. Now, as then, the Czar lies buried within a fortified palace a few miles from St. Petersburg, in terror of his life, in terror of the loss of absolutism, deaf to the cry of his people, blind to their outstretched appealing hands, dumb in the midst of their agony and tears; a weak, bigotted, vacillating puppet, under the control of women, priests, and reactionary kin. Were he mentally deficient there might be less blame, but, on the word of that

ubiquitous journalist Stead and other trustworthy interviewers, Nicolas is not mentally deficient, but a "singularly intelligent" individual, knowing perfectly well what he is about. Pitiful people have suggested: "but the poor man never hears what is going on—he is told nothing but lies, cannot read a newspaper but what is specially printed and laid before him." That such ideas are fallacies time has proved. The Czar annotates every ukase, projected law, or new regulations that his ministers and military officers lay before him. By his own hand he approved of the order for drumhead court-martials; under that order alone he is responsible for the summary death in a few months of close upon one thousand men and women, many absolutely innocent of any crime save that of holding liberal opinions. It sickens one to write of the hideous cruelties that have been perpetrated in his name. It is useless to say "he never hears of them." No one knows better than this wretched degenerate the agony and suffering into which he has plunged his country and people. He simply plays "a waiting game." The fiercest buck-jumper can be subdued given time, patience, and muscle. Russia moves slowly, he can have all the time he wants; comfortably secure in his fortress-palace he has infinite patience, and his Stolypins and imperial clique give him all the muscle he wants. The day of reckoning must come. It pauses because, as he doubtless sees, there is the usual conflict of parties, as in all social upheavals. It is satisfied to ward off the day of judgment. A European war may break out; William, our dear cousin, may come to the rescue before or when the day of reckoning dawns, and once for all break in this restive animal—the people. Meanwhile the imperial agents work their best to do it, and the unhappy nation, torn in sunder by rival factions, races, and opinions, falls an easy prey, struggle as it will, to reactionary hatred and ministerial cruelty. The press of Europe as we write teems with torture revelations; execrates in the name of humanity the acts of the political police and military officials, but is too pusillanimous to point to Tsarskoe Selo, too lukewarm to do anything but denounce. There is not a Russian who lands in England but states his Government has a curious dread of the English press comments. But the comments, strong though they may be in independent papers, are so short as to read almost perfunctorily. They had to say something—what had that girl gone through who lay through six months of a Russian winter in a Russian prison without trial, and then hanged herself by the hair of her head? Heavens! if there is a God, what shall be his thoughts when that white soul lays her hair rope in his hand and moans—"See what the Czar's men drove me to!" But whether or not a God sits to weigh men's actions, there most assuredly is football to chronicle. So it is a page to football and a few lines to the pathetic tale of the Czar's latest victim. Secret sympathy from the whole of the known world is the revolutionists—but sympathy single-handed cannot level autocracy. From every indication the overthrow of the present régime in Russia must be accomplished by those who suffer under it. That is why the division into political parties, each with the same aim in view but with conflicting methods of attaining it, fill the onlooker with pessimistic forebodings. There is no leader, no central cohesion, each struggles for liberty in his own way and liberty comes no nearer, while the Government slowly but surely is striving through Black gangs, dragonnades, exile, torture, and death, to strangle this generation of fighting rebels as Alexander III. strangled the last. Tolstoy's latest revolutionary suggestion is not "to pray," but for "every class, profession and trade to refuse obedience to any order the Government may issue." But as the authorities' present plan is to shoot every rebel for whom they have no room in prison, a series of butcheries might follow that would nip the suggestion in the bud. Many Russians believe that the struggle as we now see it will go on for years, until a Constitution is wrested from the present ruler or successor. Apparently many, if not all, of the milder type of Socialist and revolutionist will be content to have his country become, as to Government, another England, with still a Czar or other monarch for figurehead. It is, they say, too large a country, and holds too many "conquered races," to form a union of States as in America, with any chance of enduring. How that may be one cannot tell. The one thing of which one is certain is that our revolutionary brothers will fight on till they drop or win. To them the hearts of all Anarchists go out.

OUR ITALIAN LETTER.

The peasants are making history in the Province of Ferrara. This is the tenth week of a strike which has had every difficulty to cope with except indifference. The organisation was the most simple, or inefficient, as some of our friends would call it; it has, of course, developed according to the needs of the moment. The funds were insignificant. The military were used freely; but, happily for the Italian movement, the crude idea so current in England of limiting the area does not hold in this country. It is through the recognition of the opposite idea, that of enlarging the area of agitation, that these peasants have been able to give an example of action to the workers of the world. On another point also they have shown themselves sound. When the hemp sowing season came on, the proprietors made every effort to induce them to sow, appealing to them on the grounds of their personal losses through the loss of the harvest, and so forth. But there was a great *festa* when the prospect of sowing had to be abandoned, and the word of the day is—no sowing, no harvest, until we, the sowers and harvesters, desire the harvest. It is now taken for granted that the crops of the whole province will be lost unless the proprietors give in. After this, if necessary, the strikers will appeal to the country, and a general strike will make it quite clear that it is society as a whole that is the enemy, and not just a few benighted proprietors and capitalists in a single district.

Further evidence of the gulf that is widening between the political Socialist party and the actual Socialist movement, is the reply of the Peasant Strike Committee to a telegram of sympathy from the Party Executive (sent *immediately after* they had done all they could to discredit the revolutionary Trade Union movement):—

"Executive, Socialist Party, Rome.—The Strike Committee, having

taken note of the telegram of solidarity from the Executive of the Socialist Party, passes to the order of the day.—THE COMMITTEE."

Tremendous scenes of enthusiasm are taking place in all the towns of the adjoining provinces, where the children of the strikers are almost fought over by would-be adoptive mothers. The towns turn out in mass to receive them.

Another example of the utility of enlarging the area of a strike (Woolwich, please note!) was a strike this month at Savona, a town of about 50,000 inhabitants in Liguria. The metal workers came out, and, after a few days, found themselves short of funds—exhausted, in fact. They appealed to the masons, and not finding that effective, to the whole town. There was a general strike of two days, and that was enough for the masters.

But, in spite of these and many other interesting events, what is moving the country most these days is the long-expected split in the Socialist camp. For many months the party has been idle, even the Parliamentary Deputies seem to have talked themselves out. The season was ripe, and a new Syndicalist daily, published at Rome in January, was at once hailed by some as the Saviour, and others as the Devil. The party organ began insinuatingly to discredit it, and gradually worked up to the accusation that it was financed by the Government with the purpose of breaking the party. Anyone who had read the paper at all regularly would never have thought so; but since it spoke out freely on the futility of trusting the movement to politicians, and keenly advocated the necessity of direct revolutionary action, the party, already languishing for neurasthenia, felt itself hurt. Finally, the executive of the party met, and in a truly legal manner accused, found guilty, and condemned the staff and readers of the *Azione* as enemies of the people. All those concerned are to be expelled from the party, and in a truly Papal manner the faithful are warned against reading the paper. The editor, Enrico Leone, is a man of excellent reputation, and the staff is composed almost entirely of men who, in one way or another, have for years been connected with the Labour movement. It seems quite clear that, financially, the paper is a commercial speculation of a wide-awake capitalist. The Syndicalists are going to make an effort to buy him out; but, in any case, here is a daily as pure in tone as, say, the *Voice of Labour*, constantly full of anti-parliamentarism, anti-militarism, anti-authoritarianism, and all the anti's dear to the heart of the Anarchist. And it has, moreover, a positive constructive tone of the true revolutionarism which sees in the energetic action of a minority the key to the social problem.

K. W.

DISOBEDIENCE.

On every hand are the enemies of individuality and mental freedom. Custom meets us at the cradle and leaves us only at the tomb. Our first questions are answered by ignorance, and our last by superstition. We are pushed and dragged by countless hands along the beaten track, and our entire training can be summed up in the word—suppression. Our desire to have a thing or to do a thing is considered as conclusive evidence that we ought not to have it, and ought not to do it. At every turn we run against cherubim and a flaming sword guarding some entrance to the Eden of our desire. We are allowed to investigate all subjects in which we feel no particular interest, and to express the opinions of the majority with the utmost freedom. We are taught that liberty of speech should never be carried to the extent of contradicting the dead witnesses of a popular superstition. Society offers continual rewards for self-betrayal, and they are nearly all earned and claimed, and some are paid.

We have all read accounts of Christian gentlemen remarking, when about to be hanged, how much better it would have been for them if they had only followed a mother's advice. But after all, how fortunate it is for the world that the maternal advice has not always been followed. How fortunate it is for us all that it is somewhat unnatural for a human being to obey. Universal obedience is universal stagnation; disobedience is one of the conditions of progress. Select any age of the world and tell me what would have been the effect of implicit obedience. Suppose the Church had had absolute control of the human mind at any time, would not the words liberty and progress have been blotted from human speech? In defiance of advice, the world has advanced.

Suppose the astronomers had controlled the science of astronomy; suppose the doctors had controlled the science of medicine; suppose kings had been left to fix the forms of government; suppose our fathers had taken the advice of Paul, who said, "be subject to the powers that be, because they are ordained of God"; suppose the Church could control the world to-day, we would go back to chaos and old night. Philosophy would be branded as infamous; Science would again press its pale and thoughtful face against the prison bars, and round the limbs of liberty would climb the bigot's flame.

It is a blessed thing that in every age some one has had individuality enough and courage enough to stand by his own convictions,—some one who had the grandeur to say his say. I believe it was Magellan who said, "The Church says the earth is flat; but I have seen its shadow on the moon, and I have more confidence even in a shadow than in the Church." On the prow of his ship were disobedience, defiance, scorn, and success.

The trouble with most people is, they bow to what is called authority; they have a certain reverence for the old because it is old. They think a man is better for being dead, especially if he has been dead a long time. They think the fathers of their nation were the greatest and best of all mankind. All these things they implicitly believe because it is popular and patriotic, and because they were told so when they were very small, and remember distinctly of hearing mother read it out of a book. It is hard to over-estimate the influence of early training in the direction of superstition. You first teach children that a certain book is true—that it was written by God himself—that to question its truth is a sin, that to deny it is a crime, and that should they die without believing that book they will be for ever damned without benefit of clergy. The consequence is, that long before they read that book they believe it to be true. When they do read it their minds are wholly unfitted to investigate its claims. They accept it as a matter of course.

In this way the reason is overcome, the sweet instincts of humanity are blotted from the heart, and while reading its infamous pages even justice throws aside her scales, shrieking for revenge, and charity, with bloody hands, applauds a deed of murder. In this way we are taught that the revenge of man is the justice of God; that mercy is not the same everywhere. In this way the ideas of our race have been subverted. In this way we have made tyrants, bigots, and inquisitors. In this way the brain of man has become a kind of palimpsest upon which, and over the writings of nature, superstition has scrawled her countless lies. One great trouble is that most teachers are dishonest. They teach as certainties those things concerning which they entertain doubts. They do not say, "we *think* this is so," but "we *know* this is so." They do not appeal to the reason of the pupil, but they command his faith. They keep all doubts to themselves; they do not explain, they assert. All this is infamous. In this way you may make Christians, but you cannot make men; you cannot make women. You can make followers, but no leaders; disciples, but no Christs. You may promise power, honour and happiness to all those who will blindly follow, but you cannot keep your promise.

A monarch said to a hermit, "Come with me and I will give you power."

"I have all the power that I know how to use," replied the hermit.

"Come," said the king, "I will give you wealth."

"I have no wants that money can supply," said the hermit.

"I will give you honour," said the monarch.

"Ah, honour cannot be given, it must be earned," was the hermit's answer.

"Come," said the king, making a last appeal, "and I will give you happiness."

"No," said the man of solitude, "there is no happiness without liberty, and he who follows cannot be free."

"You shall have liberty too," said the king.

"Then I will stay where I am," said the old man.

And all the king's courtiers thought the hermit a fool.

—R. G. INGERSOL.

AN APPEAL FROM THE BARRICADE.

Citizens, the nineteenth century is grand, but the twentieth century will be happy. Then there will be nothing more like old history. Men will no longer have to fear, as now, a conquest, an invasion, a usurpation, a rivalry of nations with the armed hand, an interruption of civilization depending on a marriage of kings, a birth in the hereditary tyrannies, a partition of the peoples by a congress, a dismemberment by the downfall of a dynasty, a combat of two religions meeting head to head, like two goats of darkness, upon the bridge of the infinite; they will no longer have to fear famine, speculation, prostitution from distress, misery from lack of work, and the scaffold and the sword and the battle and all the brigandages of chance in the forest of events. We might almost say: there will be no events more. Men will be happy. The human race will fulfil its law as the terrestrial globe fulfils its; harmony will be re-established between the soul and the star; the soul will gravitate about the truth like the star above the light. Friends, the hour in which we live and in which I speak to you, is a gloomy hour, but of such is the terrible price of the future. A revolution is a toll-gate. Oh! the human race shall be delivered, uplifted, and consoled! We affirm it on this barricade. Whence shall arise the shouts of love, if it be not from the summits of sacrifice? O, my brothers, here is the place of junction between those who think and those who suffer; this barricade is made neither of paving-stones, nor of timbers, nor of iron; it is made of two mounds, a mound of ideas and a mound of sorrows. Misery here encounters the ideal. Here day embraces night, and says: "I will die with thee and thou shalt be born again with me!" From the pressure of all desolations faith gushes forth. Sufferings bring their agony here and ideas their immortality. This agony and this immortality are to mingle and compose our death. Brothers, he who dies here will die in the radiance of the future, and we are entering a grave illuminated by the dawn.—Victor Hugo.

** Any books on Anarchism, Socialism, or kindred subjects forwarded (if obtainable) on receipt of order and cash. Inquiries answered on receipt of stamped envelope.

Davey's Defence.

A STORY OF A LOCK-OUT.

When he first came to Ashville to work in the pits nobody knew his name. He went to one of the miners' cottages and asked for a room, "with just a bed and a chair," as he explained.

"You'll want a deposit," he said to the woman when all else was settled.

"It's usual," she answered, "and you might give me your name."

"Call me Davey," he replied. And from that time to the end this simple name sufficed.

Ashville was a small town of a northern county, and its name described it better than any word that could be penned. Some towns are intersected by rivers and surrounded by hills. This one was bestrewn with ashes and surrounded by mines. Its miserable streets of grey-bricked houses, all of a size, with their dull slated roofs and ugly little chimneys, might have been a model for a City of Despair. Its roads, mere cinder tracks, wound their way through the town like a black thread of death. Its paths were made of ash, which filled the air with its dust when it was dry, and bespattered its folk with black slush when it was wet.

The mines belonged to the Ashville Mining Company; the town belonged to the Ashville Mining Company; its inhabitants belonged to the Ashville Mining Company. For nearly every man Jack of them worked in the mines, and many a woman and child found employment on the banks of the pits.

When Davey arrived in the town the outlook was not very promising. Trade was dull, and rumours were rife that the company meditated an all-round reduction of wages. There were some Socialists, too, amongst the miners, and the managers at the pits were constantly hearing of meetings and lectures at which the mine-owners were fiercely denounced. Davey, however, secured some work, and lived his dull life in his own way, making but few friends. Quiet and reserved, he went from his room to his work and from his work to his room, and little was known of him except that, in the words of his landlady, he always had "his nose in a book."

The rumours as to the action of the company proved only too true, for in the last days of a wintry March the notices of a reduction were posted. With indignation the miners of Ashville refused to submit to this fresh inroad on their slender means of existence. They knew something of the profits of the mines; they knew even more of the heavy rent-roll of the town that went to swell the dividends of the company. Their refusal was met with the inevitable "lock-out," and Ashville found itself face to face with that terrible struggle for "a living wage" that often means—with its long, slow starvation—death to the frailest of the women and children.

When the great meeting of miners was held at which the final decision was taken, many were surprised to notice that Davey was one of the first to attend. He stood there stolid and silent, but when a miner at his side asked, "Are you with us, Davey?" he answered in a loud voice, "I'm with you, mate, till the end." Somehow his voice gave confidence to those who heard him, though they hardly knew why, and a certain feeling of respect was manifested towards one who had come out of his shell and taken the right side at the moment of a great crisis.

The struggle dragged on from week to week, and the pale, thin faces of the people began to tell the tale of bitter suffering that was being endured in those dismal rows of silent streets. Sickness and disease also began to play havoc, especially amongst the children. One morning the Ashville *Daily Express* printed some news that wrenched the hearts of the unhappy townfolk. Mrs. Elliott, the wife of a miner, who had lost her only child, indirectly as a result of the privations they were suffering, had drowned herself. Grief and despair had brought this poor woman, a great favourite with all the neighbours, to this terrible end. The bitter resentment felt by the miners against the company was fanned into a flame of indignation by this tragedy. Deep were the curses hurled at the heads of those who by their greed and selfishness were inflicting these horrors on poor folk who only wished to live in return for their hard labour.

About this time Davey disappeared from Ashville, and his absence from the miners' weekly meeting gave cause for general comment. The following week, however, he was back again, and as the miners gathered once more to hear words of encouragement from their speakers it was noticed that Davey was in the front loaded with heavy packages, his face almost radiant, as he was accorded the right to say a few words to the meeting. When his turn came he spoke very deliberately, in well chosen words, without the northern accent.

"Comrades," he commenced, "I can tell you all I've to say in a couple of minutes. I'm not a speaker, but I'd like you to know what I think of the injustice of this lock-out. I'm getting tired of the tameness that takes starvation lying down. I think it's time we bethought ourselves that after all we're human beings with human rights, and so, mates, I'll tell you what I've done. I've put my ideas together with a few suggestions; I've had 'em printed and here they are." With this he opened one of the packages, took out a leaflet and held it aloft. Then he continued:—"I want you to read this and think it over. I want you to let your wives read it, and maybe your children. Then we'll meet again and I'd like to hear your answer to

it. And I'd be glad of any volunteers who'd help me in the distributing of them, for I want to see one in every home." With this he commenced throwing them broadcast amongst the crowd, and having had numerous offers of help, he took up his baggage and retired with his mates to organise the distribution. In twenty-four hours every workman in Ashville had a copy of Davey's leaflet.

It made a great stir amongst the miners. It was discussed everywhere: approved by the bolder spirits, and denounced by the timid. It was, in fact, a call for immediate and revolutionary action by the miners, first against the town council for their cowardice in siding with the company against the workers, and secondly against the mineowners themselves; the people asserting the rights of humanity against their so-called rights of property by taking from the stores at the mines such quantities of coal as might be needed to warm the homes of all who were suffering from the lock-out. As to the town council, it was proposed to deal with them by marching *en masse* to the town hall and demanding that food should be supplied to all the women and children in such families as were without bread and without means. Failing any action by the council, it was further proposed that the meeting immediately organise itself into relief committees, "requisition" the necessary bread supply from the bakeries, and set about the work of distribution without delay.

The bolder spirits amongst the workmen, as we have said, welcomed this manifesto; not so the leaders, who were furious at the audacity of Davey, who, though only one of the rank and file, had taken the initiative in a direction that did not accord with their notions of leadership.

When he heard of the opposition his plan had met with, Davey smiled. "I expected as much, or rather as little," he said. "But they need not fear. I take the responsibility for this line of action, and I shall go forward with it along with any friends who'll stand by me."

The whole question was to be brought up at the next meeting, and all anticipated an exciting discussion. Things, however, did not turn out quite as expected, for the day before that fixed for the meeting Davey was arrested.

* * * * *

The law having pounced upon its victim, had little trouble in formulating the indictment. "Inciting to riot and pillage" is always a favourite charge with those in conspiracy against the people, and after the usual formalities Davey was committed for trial. "The prisoner," as the report ran, "reserved his defence."

It must be confessed the people of Ashville found some relief from their hardships in the interest aroused over Davey's coming trial. If any one had proposed at this time any arrangement of terms with the company, the answer would have been, "We can't talk of this till Davey's been tried." He was praised by some and blamed by some, but there was sympathy for him on all sides. In spite of their well-nigh exhausted funds, money was voted for his defence, and he was informed that his comrades would do all that was possible to see he had "fair play."

"If you could afford it," was Davey's reply, "I wouldn't have a penny spent in this way. But you can't afford it. Maybe now there are little ones crying for food, and food they must have. I couldn't bear to hear of another mother ending her days as did poor Jack Elliott's wife. Tell my mates I shall make my own defence."

(To be continued.)

THE NECESSITY OF ORGANISATION.

I think the time has arrived when a discussion on the question of organisation in the Anarchist movement would be an advantage.

The aim of this article is to suggest methods for the organisation of the Anarchist comrades, in order to ensure a regular agitation against the three chief principals of to-day's capitalistic society—State, capital, and religion. The future will decide whether or not we are to succeed; but one thing is certain: what we have not to-day we shall have to-morrow if the time for organisation has come.

Before touching the question of organising groups, it is necessary that we all agree upon the necessity for organisation. It is also necessary to understand the position of the workers in general, and of the Anarchists in particular. Only when we form a right conception of these can we justly appreciate the utility of organisation. Everyone knows that there was a time when labour exhausted the whole physical strength of the worker, and those that wanted labour's strength were forced to use two means to gain it. First, they promised the men more privileges if they would leave their fields and farms and go into the factories; secondly, if these promises failed to induce the labourers to desert their homesteads and agricultural occupation, the oppressors took their usual course and resorted to robbery and brute force. Whole bands of ruffians, organised by them, attacked the poor peasants, burnt their homes, killed their cattle, and in the end the peasants, forced by hunger, had to sell their labour in the factories for bread. The English history of the seventeenth century is full of such facts. (I should like to remark that the Social Democrats call this a natural process.)

Now, the conclusions derived from the foregoing prove to us that, in the first case, the peasant's individuality and love of the land enabled him to resist the temptation of going in the factories, therefore he did not feel so strongly the necessity to organise to protect himself

against the robbers (though they did organise to some extent); whilst, in the second case, they were forced to organise in order to meet the outrages (afterwards legalised by the State) committed on them, and prevent their utter annihilation. In such a case one individual could not protect himself sufficiently.

But while in those times the labourer could put at least his labour in the field, and fight a determined battle against his oppressors, we see quite the contrary to-day. The fight of the individual against the capitalist of to-day would yield very little for the working class, and do little damage to the capitalist. To-day, at a time when mechanical processes are higher than they ever were before (of course, not to benefit the workers), when nearly every day scores of labourers are thrown on the pavement, the army of unemployed swells, of course, to an immense extent. When, to fill the place of one worker, ten come forward, at such a time, I repeat, even the strongest will fail in the struggle if he fights alone. For example, let us take a workshop with ten labourers, and let one of them ask for higher wages, and you may be sure next morning a notice will appear in the shop window, "Workman wanted," and the old hand need not trouble to come again. The same happens, only on a bigger scale, in factories. And how is it even with the intelligent worker—that is, one whom the "boss" cannot spare as he can the common labourer—can he, as an individual, be successful in a fight with his "boss"? No; even they are to-day so numerous as to be seeking for work. But there is one thing that will be victorious over the bourgeoisie, and that is organisation with a conscious aim. It is a fact that the workman to-day could have absolute power in production if only he were conscious of it. No one could boast of victory over him.

And we, who call ourselves Anarchists, can we, as individuals, be successful? No; because we not only suffer as workers, but also as Anarchists. Anarchism as a principle is the most necessary of all, because it holds that the strength of the capitalist system lies in the idea of wages and the idea of the State, and in whatever form it may be, Radical or Social Democratic. We are convinced that the capitalist system cannot be altered by reforms, knowing that every reform given by the bourgeoisie tends only to one end—on the one hand, to blind the eyes of the workers, and on the other hand to rob him of the necessities of life. For the rulers the idea of Anarchism is the most dangerous of all. It matters not what means the Anarchists avail themselves of, whether peaceful or otherwise. They are persecuted all the same. Let us take, for example, Dr. P. Elzbacher ("Anarchism before the Court of Inquiry"). There we will find that only three of the seven Anarchistic theories which he characterises propagate terror as a method. Nevertheless, all the Anarchists that are against terrorism are persecuted in the same manner. Any means are good enough to annihilate them. They are represented as thieves and murderers of the lowest kind. Yes, it is the idea that makes the tyrants tremble and forces them to enact laws against the Anarchists. Here, in England also, the beginning of a systematic campaign against them makes itself felt. Now, when we see that all are against us, from the bourgeoisie to the Social Democrats, an organised propaganda is necessary. We have to show the workers that we are those who work really for their interests. We have to tell them that if they want something from society for which they work, they will have to prepare for a never-ceasing struggle to gain it. But where are those who wish to show the workers the right way? To do so there must be a strong organisation. Therefore, comrades, these words shall not be like a call in the desert; let them fall upon the hearts of those who suffer and struggle for the well-being of humanity.

Let us unite, therefore, everywhere into groups, because it is time we had our own organisations. And here let me use the words of a revolutionist named Chiliabov: "Indifference in the time of slavery is crime." At the present time, when the capitalists' *auto da fe* swallows every day hundreds of victims, when god Mammon devours day by day thousands of workers, leaving behind him a sea of blood and tears, it is really a crime to be indifferent. Up, comrades, let us work for progress! We are those that are abused by the so-called scientific—those who are insulted by the mass, and chased and persecuted by Governments. Therefore, once again, comrades, organise for the good work in a good cause!

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