C.I.R.A.

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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The Amsterdam Congress.

All Anarchists are not agreed as to the utility of congresses, but even those most opposed will feel some satisfaction at the success of the gathering at Amsterdam. The most encouraging feature of the Congress was the evident sincerity displayed by all comrades to discuss points with the one desire to arrive at clear and, if possible, unanimous conclusions. Unanimous or not, however, the autonomy of every nation and of every group was upheld in the true Anarchist spirit.

The subjects for discussion were given in our last issue, and it will be sufficient to remark here how much is gained, even in theoretical discussion, by following the lines of the economic struggle. Whatever differences of opinion may exist as to tactics, the one great aim of the emancipation of the workers by the overthrow of the present economic system with its everlasting curse of wage-slavery unites all comrades in the international propaganda.

The question may be asked, what will be gained for the movement by all the resolutions adopted at the Congress? Well, much will be gained, and the reason is not far to seek. There are times when congresses are necessary to the life of a movement. Such times do not fall periodically on the same month of every year. They arise in the course of social evolution through a multitude of circumstances over which the comrades may have little or no control. There are psychological moments for congresses as there are for everything else, and the success of the Amsterdam Congress will be found to be attributable to a large extent to the fact that it has caught the "flowing tide" at the commencement of an era that is just opening with untold possibilities for advanced movement.

Historically speaking, the Anarchist movement has to-day arrived at a most interesting phase of its development. Whilst for many years much abstract and possibly necessary discussion has taken place as to the relation of Anarchism to the various problems of social life—such, for instance, as organisation, Communism and individual liberty, crime and punishment, and so on—one great fact has been slowly but surely developing itself, viz., that Anarchist aims and methods could find an immense field for action in the organised Labour movements of the present day. Our French comrades have seen this, and have followed these lines with remarkable success, whilst the Russian revolution has shown to the world of Labour the unlimited possibilities of the General Strike.

Out of this has arisen the propaganda of Direct Action, in reality old as time, but new to this State-ridden generation. The Amsterdam Congress comes at the right moment, in the midst of all this renewed life and activity; and the discussions as to the future developments in the economic struggle cannot but have healthy and encouraging results for the movement.

It must be remembered, however, that all this could not have been achieved without the tireless efforts made by our Dutch comrades, in the face of great difficulties, to bring this gathering to a successful issue. We hope all our friends will feel deep satisfaction at the results, and that the large section of our anti-militarist comrades in Holland will feel their great cause has gained by the event.

We are not of those who think that the quarrels and disputes cannot at times have fruitful results, but in face of the calumnies of the capitalist and Social Democratic press we translate from *La Guerre Sociale* the estimate of the Amsterdam Congress given by two French capitalist papers.

Le Matin says:—"The delegates have left Amsterdam in perfect accord: the work of the Congress was considerable: during seven days it held eighteen meetings of several hours' duration."

Le Journal goes even further. "The Anarchists," it says, "have given an example of zeal and love of work. I have seldom seen congresses work so seriously. All listened with attention, taking notes in a religious silence, observing a perfect discipline."

The Trade Union Congress.

It has been frequently urged by Parliamentarians that if no practical results could be gained by elections, at least it would mean good propaganda to have Socialists in the House. They would, so to speak, have the ear of the nation. Well, the nation has been listening with all its ears, but what has reached them from the oracles of the Gospel of Discontent may safely be regarded as a negligible quantity. It may fairly be surmised that the winter of *their* discontent has been changed to summer by the glorious *sum* of £200 per annum. Such is life—politically speaking.

The gathering of Trade Unionists at Bath enables us to draw some conclusions as to the efficacy of such a gathering for the advancement of Labour matters compared to the "sounding board" of the House of Commons. It is, of course, quite obvious that the work of the Congress is made up of "pious resolutions," simply intended as a spur to the Government to speed up its gear in this or that direction. It is equally clear that unless these resolutions are backed by a vigorous or even a threatening agitation amongst the masses, the Government will "wink the other eye" and play the capitalist game. All this goes without saying. But the point to be noticed is that the very people who are either dumb or indifferent in the House have been able to speak a little of their minds at the Congress, and give a little certitude to their ideas.

Now, as a matter of fact, the Labour movement is starving for the need of bold ideas that will infuse into it a more audacious spirit and bolder action. It is still stricken with a conservative spirit and the wretched habit of waiting on "leaders" and officials, who are very busy compromising with the capitalist and frittering away the initiative of the Unions for a mess of miserable political pottage. So that, small as may be the results of the resolutions passed at the Congress, they will at any rate help to stir the sluggish waters, and in their tendencies mark a considerable advance on what have been proposed for many years past.

Except for those who have never thrown off the jingo fever, it will be gratifying to see how the Congress has disposed of the question of a Citizen Army. The halo of this military glory is not destined as yet to surround that sublime martyr of the Stuttgart Congress, who returned with an advertisement that must have aroused the envy of "Pears' Soap."

Two other resolutions are noticeable, the one affirming the right to strike, the other opposing the principle of compulsory arbitration in Labour disputes. As to the former, it is simply astonishing that amongst men who are supposed to know the history of the Labour movement such a right should ever have been called in question. It is only another instance of that wretched spirit noticeable in many Englishmen who boast of the liberty they enjoy, and hypocritically turn round and deny the very means by which those liberties were gained.

No doubt the news that reaches us from New Zealand has done most of all to give the death-blow to compulsory arbitration. Possibly some of the wise men of the Labour movement will from interested motives still urge this as a "reform," but we imagine the workers will not be so easily misled. They are slow to see their mistakes, it is true. But of late their "leaders" have given them such amazing instances of blundering stupidity and worse, that they are rapidly being educated into the need for a new departure. In a few years we shall see them turning in disgust from politics to direct action.

CIRA

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NOTES.

THE COST OF PRIVATE PROPERTY.

We note that one day's work at the "Old Bailey" and the Clerkenwell Sessions gives the following results of the law's efforts in protecting private property.

The property "appropriated" was as follows:—Two pairs of boots, one watch, boots, shoes and costumes (number not mentioned).

In addition, there was one case of highway robbery, one case of embezzlement, and one of forgery. Independent of the causes that may have driven people to these acts, one is struck by the comparative triviality of them all—compared, for instance, with the huge robberies perpetrated every day by landlords and capitalists.

The punishment meted out for these crimes works out as follows:—Nine individuals will suffer in varying terms imprisonment amounting in the gross to eight years, eleven months and three weeks. Nine persons degraded and probably confirmed in their "criminality"; the certainty that all this will cost twenty or thirty times the value of the property stolen; and finally, all the degradation of the police and spy system to bring these victims to "justice"—this is the price of one day's work in protecting private property. Meanwhile the sweater, the stock-jobber and big rogues generally are having a high time as the pets of "society." This same society seems to act on the principle: first make your criminal, then punish him.

CRIMINALS WHO *are* CRIMINALS.

To give an idea by what colossal crimes the "pillars" of this society are maintained, we quote the following from *Concord* for August:—

> Groups of capitalists in England, Germany, and France sell the money, explosives, and weapons whereby the various nations of the world maintain themselves on a footing of defence and offence against their neighbours and rivals. As a consequence, in every country colossal interests rally by instinct to "the flag" and foster the worst excesses of the Jingo spirit. It thus happens that the intrigues of foreign consuls, the wire-pullings of Ambassadors, the ups and downs of a dozen different Stock Exchanges, the fall of Ministries, and the advent to power of new Ministers of Foreign Affairs may be intimately connected with the pushing of particular commercial interests having economic ramifications penetrating deeply into the industrial life of modern States. The recent war in South Africa, the policy of the "open door" in China—blown "open" by Christian gunpowder—the French adventure in Morocco, and the war scare created in France and throughout Europe by the interposition of Germany—all these are instances of the utterly unscrupulous character of the "business element" in modern politics and of the danger of committing the credit and good name of one's country into the keeping of the Stock Exchange patriot, who regards "the flag" as "our" greatest asset, and the Army as a sort of hydra-headed bum-bailiff, rent-collector, and "chucker-out." In recent articles in *Pages Libres,* M. Delaisi pointed out with great wealth of detail how the recent diplomatic friction between France and Germany in matters connected with Morocco and the East was but the political expression of an under-current of commercial rivalry between two great rival groups of speculators and trading combinations in France and Germany, both contending for economic supremacy in Morocco and Asia Minor, and both disguising their ambitions and their threats (uttered by the mouths of their fuglemen and *âmes damnees* in the Jingo Press of France and Germany) under the thin mask of patriotism and national honour.

The perusal of this can arouse but one feeling: What revolution would not be a blessing that could overthrow such a system?

THE STUTTGART CONGRESS.

One may truly ask, what on earth did the Social Democrats meet for at Stuttgart? To discuss Socialism? Not a bit of it. For self-glorification, perhaps? Largely it would seem, judging by results. For except that Hervé, by his splendid, invincible logic, reduced Bebel to ashes, nothing seems to have been gained by all the fussing and fuming. Fancy the grand idea of Socialism being frittered down to a discussion of "Colonial Policy" and a "Citizen Army"! Where amongst the Social Democrats shall we find true Socialism? Spite of their red flags and their high-sounding phrases, they have deserted their revolutionary ideals and become a party of political opportunists. True Socialists will recognise the future is not for these compromisers; they belong to the past, or rather they will be absorbed by the bourgeois. Already the workers are awakening to the fact that their emancipation cannot be gained by the politician, but must result from their own initiative and organisation.

THE INTERNATIONAL ANARCHIST CONGRESS.

The long-expected Congress was held, as announced, at Amsterdam, from the 24th to the 31st of last month. Not a few journeyed there with doubt in their hearts, but true Anarchist doubt, open to all reasonable persuasion. And some there were who had no doubt of the success of the Congress, and their conviction prevailed. It was not so much the formal declaration of the formation of the Anarchist International, as the immediate recognition of the already existing International, that gave to the Congress the aspect and atmosphere we call success. It was the clear manifestation of this pre-existent and indestructible unity that smothered the personalities of the preliminary sitting.

And, surely, the fact of a reception of delegates spontaneously transforming itself into a preliminary sitting is evidence in itself of the earnestness of those delegates. How different from the bourgeois receptions, where gossip and refreshments are the only unifying principles. Not that the refreshments of the luxurious Plancius Hall were unattractive; they were quite bourgeois in their refinement, judging by the difficulty Comrade Malatesta had in procuring a bit of dry bread.

On the Sunday we had a foretaste of the week to come in the speeches of delegates from eight countries at the well-attended public meeting in the Hall garden. It was a delight to see the keen attention of the crowd, and it was fine to see the enthusiasm of each speaker unruffled by the fact that probably not one in the crowd understood a word of the language used. (But then, do crowds always understand their own language?) The translators also had a foretaste of the week to come. Their services throughout cannot be over-estimated, for it is particularly difficult to translate what one is not in entire sympathy with, as was frequently the case during the sittings.

Monday morning was wasted on a discussion of the agenda. It was heated at times, but it must be recorded to the credit of the Congress that a single adjournment of ten minutes was sufficient to give the proceedings the fair start for an otherwise clear week. Reports on the movement were first taken. Of special interest were those from Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, the United States, Germany, Bohemia, and Russia. It was interesting also to hear that the restless Balkan States are awakening to the possibilities of true revolution. But if there is one thing we must take to heart it was the overshadowing of the English report by that of the foreign groups in England. We hope that this will be rectified at the next Congress, and it can only be so by an increased activity and devotion on our part.

The second day opened with the chief question before the Congress, that of organisation. As was pointed out by one of the speakers, the Congress itself was a sign of evolution towards organisation. The popular impression that Anarchists desire the complete destruction of all organisation was shown to be due to the mistake in supposing that society is already organised. The discussion showed constant tendencies to overlap the practice of organisation, but on the whole the speakers were clear and decided on the necessity of embodying the theory of organisation in the theory of Anarchism. Many attempts were made to define individualism, but this was abandoned for all recognised that it can only be achieved in a society imbued with the Communist principle of toleration, just as Communism without free individualism is unworthy of the name. But two definite kinds of individualism were discovered,—bourgeois individualism, self only; and Anarchist individualism, self and all. Ibsen's "lonely man the strongest" theory was condemned by one speaker. Another pointed out that Dr. Stockman was at no point in the play so far from being alone as at the end, when he declares this theory. Opinions were divided as to the necessity of organisation for propaganda, but the avidity with which the comrades booked addresses, names of papers and pamphlets, and all information of use to their propaganda showed that some at least felt the necessity of being in direct touch with other countries for that purpose alone. And when it came to the question of helping comrades threatened with imprisonment it was declared with shame that we leave it to the organised Freethinkers and Socialists to work up the demonstrations that alone can insure their liberation.

We do not organise because we are afraid of authority growing up in our organisations, said one speaker, and opened an interesting discussion on the nature of authority, the force authority of the State and the moral authority of the most active, intelligent or capable among us. The only way to abolish the latter is to educate all so that they may perceive the independence underlying every individuality. With this as the first principle of education, and federalism without executive for our organisation, the Anarchist movement will lead to a state of society in which social, economic, or sexual subordination will be impossible.

This discussion of theories having cleared the ground for the practical work of organisation, a private sitting was held, the result of which was communicated in a resolution declaring the foundation of the Anarchist International and the formation of an International

Correspondence Bureau. This Bureau has, of course, absolutely no executive duties, being simply to facilitate the exchange and distribution of information from all countries. No doubt many will continue to correspond direct with other countries, and the Bureau is not intended to supplant this far more vital relationship; indeed it is hoped that through the Bureau it will be established wherever it is wanting. The only other duty of the Bureau is to found international archives, and for this future historians of the Anarchist movement will look back with gratitude on the Amsterdam Congress.

The third important matter was then taken: the relations of Anarchists and Syndicalism—that is, Trade Unionism. At first there seemed to be a hopeless division on the point of whether Anarchism is helped or hindered by action within the ranks of the Labour movement, but when those who most strongly advocated it explained what important changes had been effected in those Unions where Anarchists had been at work, and showed also that they did not look upon Syndicalism, or revolutionary Trade Unionism, as sufficient in itself to manage the revolution and open the new era of liberty, there were found to be a great many more in favour of such action than had been supposed. The Trade Unions are a means of propaganda and agitation; we must at all costs keep in touch with the mass movement; we must not create Unions that will compete with other Unions; if we are for the workers, we must be for the workers' organisations and revive therein the revolutionary spirit which we lose when we get out of touch with the mass movement. These are some of the chief sentiments of the discussion. The other side was not wanting. We must not confound Anarchism with Popularism, we must in no way tolerate authority of any kind, we must not subordinate the importance of the individual to the momentary welfare of the mass. But at the end the Congress was unanimous that in so far as the Trade Unions can be used for propaganda and agitation, Anarchists should become active Trade Unionists, and that, rather than form Anarchist Unions every effort should be made to prepare the evolution of the existing Unions towards the acceptance of Anarchist ideas through the propaganda of the General Strike and Expropriation.

But it is impossible to condense in this short report the deliberations of eighteen sittings. We shall publish later an extensive report from notes taken at the Congress, and also the text of all the resolutions adopted by the Congress. This is only to tell that a hundred Anarchists did not meet in vain, but carried away with them something more tangible than the inspiring fellowship which some of them will nevertheless consider the most valuable result of the first International Anarchist Congress.

IN DEFENCE OF ANARCHISM.

Humanity's embracement of the principles of utilitarian philosophy has been in inverse proportion to the hold exercised over the minds of children and adults by the dark serpent of theological superstition. Underlying all social progress is the first law of Nature, the law of self-preservation; and so long as man could live unto himself, for the most part he paid little attention to the wants of his fellows. Only as he realised that from time to time he ran risks of being deprived of his existence and means of sustaining his being did he consent to ever-increasingly recognise the obligations he was under to his fellows. And so we find that individual selfishness lies at the root of all social and industrial development, the apparent growth in the altruistic mode of expressing individual selfishness having no relation to the primary selfishness of the individual's desires. Thus we find in the tribal state a slow decay in the massacring of prisoners of war in order to turn them to account as slaves; thus does chattel slavery give way to free slavery; thus has a dominant class ever conceded advantages to those under the yoke of their oppression. In the march of industrial progress altruism has played no part, the utilitarian instincts begotten of the self-preservation desire have ever been the deciding factors; and not a dualistic crossing of altruism and egotism, but a naturally evolved egoism explains the nature of the individual's progress in Communistic inclinations. So much for the State and the economic aspects of man's development. It is now my intention to glance for a moment at the individual or idealistic side of the subject.

As the reader can well see, the nature of a species can be wholly changed as a result of the modifications resulting from the passage through a series of environments; but *only the expression* is modified in the case of the effect of factors operative in the environment on the nature of an individual member of the species. By adding to or substracting from the ethical factors in a human's environment, therefore, it is possible to divert the inclination of that person from one channel to another. In the meantime it should never be forgotten that economic conditions are continually tending to alter the individual's attitude towards abstract ideas, and to occasion a modification as a result of the action and re-action which exists between the abstract idealism of philosophy and the economic determinism of industrial conditions.

From this it can be seen to follow as a necessary consequence that, whilst the slowly dying fires of theology's hell and the decay of heaven's immortal glory have served to divert men's minds more and more from a regard for a metaphysical paradise for a consideration of how best to benefit themselves here, and have made for a negation of godly endeavour only to secure a more devoted consecration to humanitarian effort. Whilst, on the one hand, it is true of the resulting mental attitude of those who have freed their minds from the thraldom of Mother Church, on the other, economic conditions are more and more making for a modification of churchly influence on the minds of men. In the fact of this action and re-action so existing is to be found the cause of our present chaos and uncertainty in all revolutionary propaganda, our only emancipation from which will be found in the intellectual and economic destinies which constitute the logic shaping the ends of communities as well of individuals. Whilst individually, therefore, man may be said by virtue of his heredity to largely mould his environment to his own ends, the ideals and inclinations of the race are moulded by external conditions. Hence, socially a creature of circumstances, man is individually a free being capable of influencing his environment, as also of adapting it to his own ends. Only in so far, therefore, as he is a member of a society which recognises his natural freedom can he identify his interests with that of society; and only in proportion as he realises the influence society exercises in the moulding of the character of the race can he consciously contribute to the securement of his own freedom and that of his posterity, along the lines of least resistance. Hence the natural evolution of man, his place in society and his attitude towards abstract problems which have often supplied an excuse for mundane activity, only serve to emphasise humanity's potential possession of the cardinal principles of Anarchist Communism, of mankind's present promise of its inevitable arrival at that state of society which shall witness the combination of absolute individual liberty with the greatest amount of social order. With the many coerced by the few, the only "order" existent at present is that of disorder; with all enjoying the advantages of a free society there can only exist the true harmony of a social order based on an enlightened social expression of individual happiness.

In order that we might the better understand this phase of our subject it is perhaps as well to note Spencer's contribution to the consideration of society as a social organism. Referring to the individual as a unit in society, he notes the tribal tendency to a small aggregation of individual units, augmenting insensibly in mass. At first, the communities thus formed seem structureless, so simple is the nature of their structure. In the course of their development, however, they become more and more complex, and the mutual dependence of their component parts or units become more and more firmly established, until at last the life of each unit is only made possible by the consent and activity of the remaining parts. And, to complete his analogy, Spencer shows that the life of society is interdependent of, and far more prolonged than, the lives of any of its component units, which are conceived only to grow, work, reproduce and die, while the body politic, which is composed of them, survives generation after generation, increasing in mass, in completeness of structure and in functional activity. This is society as we know it, the state in which the individual is made by schoolmaster and nurse, by priest and politician, a unit existing merely for the well-being, not of the whole organism, but of the consumptive or parasitical portion of the organism; or, to vary our conception, in which the working section just have sufficient food to keep the central stomach of the organism in activity, whilst the vitals of the organism are being eaten away by the parasitic growths living in luxury on its activity.

As Spencer points out, however, whilst up to the point named the analogy between society and biological organism would seem to be complete, the comparison entirely breaks down in that the body cells are of no importance in themselves, but are only of value in so far as they contribute to the well-being of the whole; whilst, in the case of the State, it having no corporate consciousness, its existence is only of importance in so far as it contributes to the happiness of the individual. In the case of the animal, it is well that the directive power should be central, inasmuch as the cellular consciousness is corporate, and therefore central. But as the consciousness in society of its units is individual, the directive force must be individual, and hence all central authority is artificial and an impertinent imposition. Only by the operation of internal canons of thought, only by the individual's growth in the direction of social feeling, by virtue of his own experience and observation, can he learn to identify his own interests with that of the community's well-being. A central activity, devoid of conscious control, cannot do this, for there exist no nervous tissues to convey the results of central legislative effort to all parts of the body politic and inspire the units of legislative vitality. Moral suasion, educative endeavour, rational conviction—these are the only forces which will accomplish this desirable end, and inasmuch as Anarchist Communists stand for these ends as well as for the ideals already enunciated, they need have no fear of submitting their principles to analysis in the mental laboratory of reason.

GUY A. ALDRED.

Strike in the Argentine Republic.

The following is an extract from a letter from South America, dated July 28th:—

"There was a very violent strike a few days ago at the Port of Bahia Blanca in the south of the Province of Buenos Ayres. Killed and wounded on both sides. (Two Irishmen fighting for their masters, I am sorry to say, as Irishmen too often do.) Magnificent demonstration of solidarity on the part of the workers all over the Republic. Strike over yesterday; the men gaining all they demanded. The capitalist in this country is beginning to sing very small. Things have wonderfully changed, thanks to general strikes."

FAITH AND MORALITY.

Doubt has long enough been accused of immorality, but the immorality of dogmatic faith can be equally maintained. To believe is to *assert* as real to myself that which I simply conceive as possible in itself, sometimes as impossible. This is seeking to build up an artificial truth, a merely apparent truth. At the same time it is shutting one's eyes to the objective truth, thrusting it aside beforehand without knowing anything about it. The greatest enemy of human progress is the *presupposition*. To reject not only the more or less doubtful solutions, which every one may bring forward, but the problems themselves—that is flatly arresting the forward movement. Faith from that point of view becomes indolence of thought.

Indifference even is often superior to dogmatic faith. One who is indifferent says: "I do not care to know." But he adds: "I will not believe." The believer wants to believe without knowing. The first remains at least perfectly sincere towards himself, while the other tries to ensnare himself. Therefore, whatever may be the question, doubt is better than the perpetual affirmation, better than the renunciation of all personal initiative, which is called faith. This kind of intellectual suicide is inexcusable, and that which is still more strange is the pretension to justify it, as is constantly done, by invoking moral reasons. Morality should command the mind to search without resting —that is to say, precisely to guard itself against faith. "The dignity of believing!" you reply. Man has too often, all through history, rested his dignity upon errors, and truth has at first appeared to him to be a lessening of himself. The truth is not always so fair as the dream, but its advantage is that it is true. In the domain of thought there is nothing more moral than truth; and when truth cannot be secured through positive knowledge, nothing is more moral than doubt. Doubt is dignity of mind. We must, therefore, drive out of ourselves the blind respect for certain principles, for certain beliefs. We must be able to question, scrutinise, penetrate everything. Intelligence should not cast down its eyes even before the object of its adoration. A tomb in Geneva bears this inscription: "Truth has a face of brass, and those who have loved Truth will have faces of brass like her." But, it will be said, if it is irrational to affirm in our thoughts as true that which is doubtful, still it will sometimes have to be affirmed in *action*. May be; but it is always a provisional situation and a conditional affirmation: I do this, supposing it to be my duty, even supposing that I can have an absolute duty. A thousand acts of that kind cannot establish a truth. A great number of martyrs have made Christianity triumph; a little reason may be sufficient to overthrow it. Besides, how much humanity would gain if all self-sacrifice were done out of regard for science, and not for faith—if one died, not to defend a belief, but to discover a truth, however small it might be. That was what Empedocles and Pliny did, and what in our time men of science, physicians, explorers do. How many lives were lost of old to assert objects of an unsound faith, which might have been utilised for humanity and science!—*M. Guyau.*

ANARCHIST INTERNATIONAL.

Dear Comrades,—The Anarchist Congress at Amsterdam has thought it useful to create an organ of communication between comrades of different countries, and has nominated to this end an International Correspondence Bureau. This Bureau has no other duty than to facilitate the relations between those who cannot correspond directly with each other, and to bring to the knowledge of all concerned the news and propositions which will be communicated to it.

The Bureau has also the duty of organising archives of the Anarchist movement, which should be at the disposal of all the comrades.

To be able to fulfil its work the International Bureau appeals to all Anarchists to send at least two copies of all the publications concerning the movement.

The International Bureau opens at the same time a subscription to cover the deficit left by the Amsterdam Congress, and to raise necessary funds for the expenses to be involved by the Bureau. The Bureau will publish shortly the resolutions accepted by the Congress, and asks the different groups and federations to send in, as soon as possible, the number of copies they wish to receive.

With fraternal greetings, for the International Bureau,

A. Schapiro, *Secretary.*

All communications, subscriptions, publications, etc., to be sent to A. Schapiro, 163 Jubilee Street, London, E.

TO COMRADES AND FRIENDS.

With the next number *Freedom* completes its twenty-first year of life. It has lived through some of the worst years of reaction and in face of many difficulties. We intend to commemorate the occasion by publishing special articles from well-known writers relating to the history and progress of the Anarchist movement in England. It will be a good opportunity for comrades to make a special effort in pushing the sale of the paper.

ANARCHISM IN LIVERPOOL.

Of the steady growth of Anarchist thought and sentiment there can be no doubt. Go where one will, one finds the economics of Communism being ever increasingly embraced by those who insist on individual freedom in the strictest sense of those terms. This is particularly true of Liverpool, where, on the occasion of my recent visit, I found a considerable leaven of Anarchism amidst the general ideas of the man in the street. The group here has recently drawn several of the most active Social Democrats over from a pseudo-Marxianism to Bakuninism, and in the Clarion Café—the central Socialist club here—several sympathiers with the principles of Communism are to be found. Another pleasing feature of the propaganda is the general attention which is paid to the Anarchist lectures, which offers a curious contrast to the general impatience which characterises the attitude of the open-air audiences to the pleas of Social Democrats for sending members of their body to Parliament. There can be no doubt that local conditions have largely helped forward the propaganda. There is the Irish section, which is somewhat annoyed at the landlordism of the Redmond party, and are accordingly coming more and more under the influence of the Sinn Fein movement. Then there is the growth of the Freethought movement, the seeds of the progress of which were sown in the sectarian strife between Protestant and Catholic; whilst the poverty of the slums here has served to demonstrate the necessity for a drastic remedy. Finally, all the members of the group are careful students of Spencer, Morris, Kropotkin, and are never tired of analysing the carefully evolved theories of the first named in the light of that practical sympathy begotten of experience. Although only organised in June, the English movement is strong here, whilst the same is true of the Jewish and Spanish movements. Withal, the Anarchist propaganda in Liverpool is on as firm a foundation as one could wish for, and its fervour is rapidly speading to neighbouring cities.

Guy A. Aldred.

MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(*August 11—September 12.*)

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