

Freedom

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MONTHLY; ONE PENNY

NOTES.

Triumphant Foolocracy.

The war scare is with us again, and the thoughtless victims of the Jingo fever are imbibing the lies and absurdities of the Yellow Press, and, it must be said, of the Yellow politicians also. In the Socialist movement the same marionette-like figures are acting the same part. Hyndman parades before us talking his Imperialist nonsense, the Red Flag in one hand and the Union Jack in the other. Then comes Blatchford, still obsessed by the sergeant-major spirit of his soldiering days, and, as usual, singing "Rule, Britannia!" which will undoubtedly be his swan-song. They do not for a moment realise how cleverly Asquith and Co. have engineered the whole business to carry the Navy Vote. They do not see that these political conjurers wanted a cloak to cover their broken pledges as to social reform, and to ward off the serious threat from their own party of revolt against the increased expenditure on "Dreadnoughts." Perhaps they have not even noticed that Crooks (Woolwich), Jenkins (Chatham), and Wilkie (Dundee) each deserted both party and principle to vote rank Jingo and save their precious seats—another little episode in the political game which may pass unnoticed while the scare is on. And all this because Germany, well-nigh exhausted with her military burden, is making a desperate effort to imitate in a smaller degree our own criminal folly.

Common-Sense Considerations.

Why cannot we have as much common-sense in discussing the question of invasion as we might have in reasoning over any other international problem? Certainly none can detest the German military spirit more than it is detested by Anarchists. It is an evil in all countries. But that is not the point. The one question to be answered is this: If England was at the mercy of Germany, would the Germans themselves be so foolish as to imagine that all other nations would stand idly by and see a rival gain such a position of world-power as has never yet been known in history? In other words, it would need a world-wide agreement that England must be crushed before any nation would begin even to think of such an undertaking. As such an agreement will never be arrived at, and as Germany has other fish to fry, and is not such a nation of fools as we imagine, it is perfectly certain that the "Englishman's home," such as it is, will continue to be taxed by an English Government, the rent collected by an English landlord, or himself thrown into the street by English brokers, for some generations to come—if the Social Revolution does not happen to save him from these evils. Let us hope, however, that before many more millions of sweated wealth are swallowed by those insatiable plunderers, the great States, the General Strike will have so far developed that the workers themselves shall know how to checkmate the real enemy whom we have always with us.

War on the Sweater.

Political Reformists are very sanguine about the Winston Churchill Anti-Sweating Bill, and Will Crooks, fresh from voting for more "Dreadnoughts," said he could see in it "a ray of hope" for the helpless workers. We can assure all these optimists, in advance, that the employers will drive the capitalist coach-and-four through it just as easily as they have done with most other measures. If the public had spirit enough to boycott the sweater, some effect might be made in checking—not abolishing—that evil. But the real remedy lies, not in Acts of Parliament nor in public caprice, but in the direct action of the workers themselves. The self-satisfied politician smiles, of course, at the mere suggestion of the workers doing anything for themselves and dispensing with *him*. But one instance will show from which direction comes the "ray of hope" for the

workers. Much public interest has lately been shown in France in the awful sweating of the poor girls in the artificial flower trade. The Paris correspondent of the *Daily News* tells us that they may earn thirteen pence in a day of ten hours. Hitherto they have had no Union, and "political action" has done nothing for them; so they are beginning to organise, and have even started a co-operative business. The correspondent adds: "They are saving themselves while the M.P.'s are talking." So once more direct action is vindicated, and in this, as the wage-slaves will speedily realise, there is even something more than "a ray of hope."

Free Agreement Vindicated.

In the *Clarion* for March 12, Halliday Sparling gives an interesting account of a village, Cénomes, in the commune of Montagnol, which contains a population of about 700. It must be confessed that it would be pleasant and refreshing to find even a little commune of 700 souls enjoying a life of comparative happiness and freedom. These are the descendants of the people whose bravery held the whole force of France at bay for the two years 1702-1704. Owing to this courage, they have retained their autonomy to an extent that would hardly be deemed credible by an outsider. One point they have always followed and adhered to "from the beginning of time," as an official says; that is in the matter of marriage. It has always been a free agreement. A village elder states the case so naively that it is pleasant to quote him:—

"A girl and her boy, they come together in the way of nature, and after a while, when they've had time to know that they suit one another, they say to the rest of us, 'Well, there it is. We're married. Now we can go and put down our names in the book.' And that is the right way. I did the same with my wife, my father and mother did the same before me, and their fathers and mothers before them. It is our habit hereabouts since the world began, and what harm does it do to any one? If a couple come together, and find they don't get on, why, they just separate, and try again, and there's no fighting and no divorce."

Of course, the State wants to interfere and substitute legal misery for free happiness; but we hope it will fail, for these free unions form an idyllic picture beside our sordid "legality."

"Scores of Willing Hands."

The little fishing village of Prawle has recently given an example of mutual aid and spontaneous organisation. When allowed full development, this spirit, we Anarchist Communists maintain, must and will secure in a freely organised society the best and surest achievement of all those social activities that capitalists—and some others—insist would cease without the machinery of the State. Let us give a moment's thought to this particular instance. It was late at night, a storm was raging, the water was like "boiling surf." Suddenly the villagers were awakened by hearing a steamer's hooter, and on looking out they saw the vessel and a light flaring which they knew meant distress. "The volunteer crew of villagers was summoned, and all speed was made to the wreck with the life-saving appliances." Over a difficult road the horses could draw the wagon only to within 500 yards of the wreck. "Over the remaining 500 yards the whole of the gear was carried by *scores of willing hands*." With immense difficulty, and by help of men standing waist-high in the icy water, the crew of sixteen were saved and taken to houses where fires had been lit and food prepared. The little village of Prawle went about its work next day as though nothing had happened, and probably the last thing that entered the minds of the rescuers was any thought of reward. And the men saved were *foreigners*—poor French seamen who could hardly say "Thank you." But the Prawle villagers did their best for them, as they would for any others. They are like the brave lifeboatmen of Margate, who are proud to call their boat "A Friend to all Nations." The "enemies" are in the Cabinets of the great Governments.

A TRIP DOWN THE TYNE.

Who has not heard of that wonderful spot known as "Tyneside"? Is it not supposed to be one of the pillars of England's greatness? For here are constructed those terrible life-destroying monsters which a senseless, brutal Government needs to maintain its prestige, to defend the interests of Capitalism, and to inspire the people with all those false notions of patriotism and glory that blind them to the crime and folly of it all.

Let us glance for a moment at the life centred here and the scenes that meet the eye.

As we descend Pilgrim Street and the Sandhills, we see crowds of people streaming off the Quay, where they had been listening to quack doctors, tipsters talking politics, temperance reformers, Socialists, and Anarchists, their voices mingling with those of the vendors of fruit, ice-cream, sweets, old clothes, newspapers, penny dreadfuls, and novelettes.

A strange sight this Quay on a Sunday morning, the big, stately boats lying alongside looking serene and majestic, whilst below all is bustle, noise, and excitement; an open market-place such as one never sees in any other town.

Here is a short, stodgy figure of a man with an unpleasant face, florid as to complexion, coarse features, and small, cunning eyes; he is made more unprepossessing by having his hair cropped short. On week-days he is a tipster, on Sundays a would-be orator. Some one told me he was a Socialist. I paused to listen, but never a word heard I of Socialism. His speech was the most dreadful thing I have ever heard, a perfect torrent of vulgar abuse expressed in the coarsest language.

A little further along is a small, lithe figure of a man standing on a portable platform, his face eager, quick eyes deep set, soft brown hair with great natural waves, worn rather long, the whole face and figure betokening fierce eagerness and desperate earnestness. He is telling his crowd of listeners not to put faith in Parliament, but to do things for themselves. He is an Anarchist Communist.

We turn away and mingle with a little stream of folk going aboard the steamer to North Shields. What a mixed crowd it is, we notice as the boat steams away from the Quay side. But now the river claims our attention.

What a marvellous sight is the river! How it appeals to the imagination. What contrasts! The beautiful, stately ships and the mean little quays. Graceful sailing-ships from Norway; schooner, barque, and brigantine, so beautiful with their masts and spars; the petty landing-stages at all the calling-stations, each with three huts for waiting-rooms, one for ladies only and one for gentlemen; in between these a funny little shop where soiled-looking sweets, penny bloods, and novelettes are sold.

The river was crowded with craft—steamships from Germany, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Portugal; sailing-ships from Norway, Sweden, France; one fine old wooden sailing-ship, now so seldom seen, from Norway, spoke of fiords and romantic folklore; a steamer from Aberdeen, and one from Leith; tugs innumerable.

Just beyond South Shields the river took on quite a gay aspect, tugs painted green, red, blue, and yellow lying beside great steamers, red and white. This bright patch of colour was a great relief after the terrible grimness we had just passed; first, on the banks the great ugly chemical works and Palmer's shipyard, with the monstrous cranes which have displaced so much labour. In the river, lying side by side, are two torpedo boats and one torpedo-boat destroyer, grey, grim-looking monsters, one mass of treacherous machinery, constructed for fell murder; after these the devilish death-dealing mass, the battleship "Lord Nelson," later the "Invincible," quite as fearful a thing, but not quite so formidable-looking.

These horrible, grim, murderous-looking masses of diabolical machinery are a blasphemous parody on the beautiful, gracious, graceful sailing-ships, the one representing wholesale murder, the other an exchange between and a better understanding of all nations. We are struck by what greed of gain has produced in the way of life-destroying hulks, and what need of the necessities of life has produced in the swift steamships and the lovely sailing-boats.

We land at North Shields and turn off by the narrow, circuitous lane beside the Quay; dirty and full of smells it is; all doss-houses, cheap eating-houses, and public-houses. Almost every sign bears the name of a foreigner; hung out from the windows are the Italian, Swiss, and Norwegian colours; most of the faces to be seen are swarthy in colour and of any nationality but English; we even meet a group of Chinese sailors.

At last we reach clean, quiet, peaceful-looking Tynemouth;

look at its ruined Priory, its little bay; and then back by car to the Quay, where the "great" Hunnable harangues a crowd he seems to amuse vastly.

A day of colour, grace, and contour, of interest in the great heart of humanity, and of grim, haunting horror—all in a few miles on the River Tyne.

BEE.

FREE SOCIETY IN BURMA AND ENGLISH RULE.

I have lately been reading two books* by Feilding Hall, an Englishman who has had a long experience of Burma, and is a civil servant to boot. The first volume, which describes the Burmese just before Burma was annexed, is like a fresh breeze, wafting joyous echoes from a bright, free land, to us surrounded by the sordidness and misery of modern life. The second volume is painful reading; the author tries to persuade himself that the English can help the Burmese, and that they have something to teach them. The reader gradually realises the sickening truth: how a free, happy, and harmonious people are undone, ruined, and crushed by our soul-destroying and brutal government and commerce. I want to try in this short article to give a brief sketch of Burmese life as it was and as it is. The picture, I think, is deeply instructive.

I have headed this article "Free Society in Burma." In so doing I am certainly guilty of some exaggeration; however, Burmese life was free compared with ours. They had a King, but the central Government was weak and corrupt, and played no real part in their life. The Burmese were a community of equals; there were no rich men, no great landowners, and no destitute. All their institutions were grown out of the life of the people, and they were the very opposite of feudalism. Burmese villages (there were no large towns) were to a very great extent independent; they built their own monasteries and schools by voluntary effort, and taxed themselves without friction. The Burmese social customs aimed at enabling mankind to live in comfort and ease. The women were the freest in the world, and were on an equal footing with the men. All was open to the light of day in their social life. There were no guilds of trades or arts or sciences. If a man discovered a new method of working silver, say, it became common property.

The Burman wanted very few books. He thinks his own thoughts, sees with his own eyes. Love of books only comes to him who is shut away from the world by poverty or ill-health. The Burman loved his life, and the object of life to him was to be happy. The Burmese made the most of the fresh air and the sunshine, and the great thoughts that come to you in the forest. They passionately delighted in the love and companionship of friends, the low laugh of women, and the joy of children. They made their lives full ones, and found leisure to teach their hearts to enjoy all these things.

When the English came, the Burmese watched us with surprise. They saw us content with a cheerless, drudging life if, by the absence of love and beauty, we could put away a little money, enlarge our business, or cut a bigger figure in the world. Compared with the Burmese, we grow old quickly; our minds get weary, our sympathies grow narrow, our whole souls are destroyed for a little money, a little fame, or a little promotion. Then we retire, go home, and do not know how to enjoy ourselves.

The religion of the Burmese was, and is still for the most part, Buddhism; but the monks or priests have no authority. If any one came to the monks for counsel, they simply referred him to the teaching of Buddha, leaving the person to apply it. The chief duties of the monks were to know the sacred books and to teach the children. Their religion by its very nature abhorred all semblance of authority. Most men, at one time or another, were monks for a period. An English officer at the time of the Burmese War asked, "What is the good of a religion like Buddhism?" because the monks refused to have anything to do with the war, and condemned their countrymen for fighting the English!

* * *

With the introduction of English rule and life and customs, all these things are changed. There are now rich and poor. A great deal of the land is mortgaged. The handicrafts have nearly all suffered; some are now dead—a girl can no longer earn a living by weaving and so on. Production has greatly increased, but prices have gone up, and there is less food than there used to be. There is now a large landless class of "coolies"—labourers who hire themselves out. There is much

* "The Soul of a People" and "A People at School."

more money in the country, with a corresponding increase of misery. The introduction of Christianity has had no good effect on the moral standard of the people; the Christian customs of marriage especially have had a pernicious effect. It is also terrible to see how demoralising contact with English officialism is to all sorts and conditions of men. To be attached to our administration is almost a sign of disreputeableness. Only the worst types of Burmese will become our petty officials and policemen.

CARLYLE POTTER.

MORALS OF MODERN MAIDENS.

A question of some interest has been raised by the production at the Kingsway Theatre of Mr. Wilfrid Coleby's new comedy, "The Truants."

Bill Chetwood, the principal figure, on his return to England after an absence of ten years finds that Englishwomen have completely changed. In place of the precisely proper and submissively subservient woman of the late "nineties," he is confronted with an aggressive female agitating for votes and openly avowing her intention of living her own life.

The question naturally arises: Are women degenerating?

The answers are voluminous and various—as divided as they are numerous.

The momentous question is discussed at home, at business, in the Press, and in public—by men and women alike—and yet no definite decision seems to have been arrived at.

Miss Cicely Hamilton, authoress of "Diana of Dobson's," expresses some interesting views on the subject in the columns of a London daily. "I cannot believe that the woman of to-day is not far better in every way than the woman of ten years ago," she writes. "... I certainly think that the emancipated women of to-day are more moral because they are more responsible. . . . They have learned to decide for themselves what is right and what is wrong. They act not merely because they are told to, as was the case ten years ago, but because they are responsible beings and not the possessors of a childish code of morals. Nowadays the emancipated woman sets up her own standard, for she has the great power of choice. Ten years ago this same power of choice was unknown. When there is no power of choice, woman is neither moral nor immoral—she is simply unmoral."

Miss Cicely Hamilton is certainly unique in her attitude towards morality, but as in so many cases of originality—she is erroneous.

Morality is derived etymologically from the Latin word *mores*, a custom. Morality is the recognised code of conduct, the prevailing system of ethics.

A moral person is one who conforms to the code; an immoral person is one who, although recognising the code, fails to conform to its dictates. An unmoral person assumes an entirely different attitude—he *ignores* morality in all its aspects.

To him, morality is an odious name—the embodiment of ignorance, prejudice, and weakness; the cloak that conceals innumerable iniquities; the coward's excuse for his cowardice; the slave's plea for slavery; and as such should be perpetually opposed by the great, the strong, and the free.

It is only the weak who have principles—they need them. The strong are, and have always been, great in spite of principles.

If modern women were "responsible beings and not the possessors of a childish code of morals," they would be unmoral, having no regard for the dictates of others. Responsible beings have no need of laws, morals, and conventions—they are for the irresponsible. But modern women are "more moral," according to Miss Hamilton!

The truth is that emancipated women of to-day have broken away from the old morality and founded a new, to which they adhere even more rigorously than did the disciples of the old. Morality is perpetually changing to suit the temperament of the age; but all moralities are forms of slavery.

The twentieth-century Tartar is nothing more than the meek gentlewoman of the "nineties" transformed into an aggressive female. She tirades against the tyranny of man, not from a love of Liberty and a detestation of Authority, but because *she* has a desire to rule, a desire which, if achieved, would mean a type of tyranny far worse than the former. The slave endowed with authority is a fiend indeed!

The ideal race will be neither slaves nor masters of slaves. Those who would rule are not fit to rule; but those who are born rulers rule in spite of themselves without exercising authority.

If Liberty were the goal of humanity, the "advanced"

woman here spoken of would not be a factor in progress, but degenerating, tending to retard the consummation of the ideal.

If Liberty be not the popular goal, with what standard can we judge?

Man is naturally slavish. He is afflicted with a mental disease called Religion. He needs must mentally and physically prostrate himself before a fetic of his own morbid imagination. Whether it be labelled God, Mammon, the State, or any other Mumbo Jumbo, it matters little—his attitude of mind is precisely the same.

Damnation to all gods, human and divine; for the human are too human, and the divine are too ethereal!

TOM WINTER.

THE RIGHT TO WORK.

I remember hearing of an occurrence that illustrates how sadly our workfolk would fare if they were not given employment. During the reconstruction days following the close of the Civil War, an old darkey sauntered into the handsomely appointed offices of the Freedmen's Bureau at Memphis.

"Is dis yer de Freedmen's Beuoh?" he asked, in open-mouthed admiration of the walnut and brass fittings of the handsome quarters.

"This is the place," courteously answered the sole occupant, who appeared to be the officer in charge.

"Well, wot yer gwine do fer de cullud man?" was his next inquiry.

"We can't do anything for you just now," said the functionary. "The last appropriation for this office was only about enough to put up these fixings and pay our salaries, and Congress will not—"

"Lor bless ye, suh," interrupted the recently emancipated citizen, "I aint axin' fur no money, no suh! All I want is jess a job er wukk. Kain't you all fine me airy job?"

The Mississippi was high at the time, and lots of driftwood was floating down the stream. The official tried a bit of pleasantry.

"I'll give you a job," he said to the old man. "There's lots of driftwood coming down the river. You go out there and gather all you can, and I'll give you half you get."

"All right, boss," said the darkey to his new employer; and away he went.

By next night the diligent employee had piled up a considerable stack of wood. He was congratulating himself on the success of his work, and making a mental survey of his half of the proceeds, when he was approached by a man whose gold-braided cap gave evidence of officialdom.

"That's a pretty good pile of wood you've gathered, uncle," said the newcomer. "I'll take this half over here," he said as he indicated one end of the pile.

"Lor bless my soul!" ejaculated the old fellow. "You doan look like de Freedmen's Beuoh gemman."

"No," he replied; "I have nothing to do with the Bureau, but I'm the wharf master, and according to the city ordinances I'm entitled to one-half the wood that's piled up on this levee."

"Ef dats de law, all right; go ahead. You tekk your harf, and de Freedmen's Beuoh tekk his harf—only I hope you gemmen won't mine ef I tekk one little stick off'n you all's harf's so's I kin mekk a fiah to cook me any little ting I mout be able to steal fore mornin'."—*Thoughts of a Fool.*

Books Received.

Der Antimilitarismus als Taktik der Anarchismus. Von Pierre Ramus. 15c. Brussels: 67 Chaussee Dielighem, St. Pièrre.

Portraits d'Hier. No. 1—Emile Zola. 25c. Paris: H. Fabre, 38 Quai de l'Hôtel-de-Ville (IV.)

L'Idea: Periodico di Propaganda Anarchica. No. 1. Distribuzione Gratuita. Cairo, Egypt: Fermo-Posta.

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Towards the Revolution!

“The strike, the strike’s the thing
Wherewith to break the power of the ring.”

The bourgeois Press of Paris has for once spoken the truth—the victory of the postal strikers means that the first battle in the Social Revolution has been won by the workers. It is a fact also of the greatest significance that these workers should be servants of the State. For it must be remembered that for those whose duties keep them in the clutches of the all-powerful ring of officialism which constitutes a Republican State, the difficulties of organisation are enormous, the influences destructive of all solidarity well-nigh overwhelming.

Yet, in spite of all this, the Paris postal clerks, both men and women, with the telegraphists and the linesmen, have given the world a glorious example of perfect solidarity and unflinching courage. The details of the struggle will be found elsewhere in our columns, but it should be remembered by all those who would grasp the real significance of this epoch-making event that in France, more even than in England, the grading of the service, the methods of promotion, the immense army of salaried officials, have always been the most potent factors in undermining the solidarity which is the first essential to success in a strike. All these barriers were swept away as by a single breath when that vulgar clown, Simyan, declared war against his staff, and a “surprise strike” followed with a fine spirit of audacity to carry it through.

The first great defeat of the “intellectual” renegade Clemenceau by the General Strike, while “political action” failed even to prick his skin, affords an opportunity for bringing home to the workers some lessons that in the great Labour struggles, inevitable in the near future, should prove of the first importance. To begin with, we see more and more clearly, as the struggle develops, that almost any one of the leading industries or departments of State can, even by striking singly, paralyse almost the whole of our social life. It used to be thought twenty years ago that it might need a combined strike of railway men, miners, and dockers to wrest, for instance, an eight-hour day from the capitalist. Now we see—such is the interdependence of modern industrialism in its various functions—that, given complete solidarity, any one of these great industries can speedily bring things to a more or less complete standstill, and compel the capitalists to give back to the workers a little of the wealth they steal, or, as in the case of the Paris strike, compel respect for the liberty and dignity of its most useful citizens.

Here is one great point to be taken to heart by the proletariat. Another is that the strike gives to the exploited an almost unlimited field of new tactics in their campaign against Capitalism. The Government and the exploited would have us believe that trouble in the economic struggle can best be settled by arbitration, by friendly discussion, by peaceful reasoning. This is a lie, and has cost the workers many and many a bitter defeat. What is really meant was shown by the attitude of the French Ministry at the commencement of the strike. Frankly stated, it is simply this: “Let us gag you and bind you hand and foot, then we will discuss terms.” That is what capitalists and Governments call “preserving the peace” or enforcing respect for “law and order.” In future the struggle is not to be quite so one-sided, and the strike will prove the great arm of defence against the merciless enemy whose greed is only equalled by his cruelty and craft. The method of the strike is manifold, and necessarily must be so. Every new attempt proves its resources in outmanoeuvring the forces of the State or the cunning of the

employers. It can be “partial,” “general,” “sympathetic,” “instantaneous,” or against war, and it can be repeated as often as need be. How different to that stupid, outworn hoax of the ballot-box, which makes no appeal to the best feelings of solidarity, inculcates no self-reliance, and by its dismal failures destroys that enthusiasm without which nothing can be gained.

The contrast between the results gained by the strike, and the miserable exhibition of political feuds, ambition, and treachery in Parliament, gives the world of Labour the opportunity of judging in which direction victory can be assured to them. For this one reason alone the Paris strike is more valuable than years of theorising. Yet it must be confessed that to some extent the strikers were, so to say, revolutionary in spite of themselves. The desire evinced by some of them not to be regarded as Revolutionists, and their denunciation of “sabotage,” are probably the last links that bind them to a bourgeois society. They will be broken in time. Meanwhile it would be well if all sections of workers could understand clearly that so far, at least, as “sabotage” is concerned, the responsibility rests with the oppressors. If Governments attempt to fill the strikers’ places with the military, is not this a most cowardly form of “sabotage,” destructive to the only means of existence the workers have—their value as wage-slaves? Is not this to be put in importance infinitely before the “property” of the exploiters? Hence the reply of the workers is to attack the capitalist in the only place in which he is vulnerable, and he has himself to blame for the consequences of his cowardice.

We congratulate the postal strikers on their splendid victory. But we trust they will remember the “price of liberty,” especially under Clemenceau; and we hope they will speedily realise the necessity for the Social Revolution to check the ravages of the State and to set them really free.

THE ASSASSINS OF BRAZIL.

To the Libertarian Press of the World.

The line of the North-Western Railway of Brazil, now in course of construction, traverses uninhabited regions covered throughout with forests and swamps. The contractors refuse peremptorily to take the precautions necessary for the protection of the health and life of the workers, a large number of whom in the marshy districts of the Matto-Grosso die daily of infectious fever and *béri-béri*.

The following are the conditions of labour:—Work is carried on under a burning tropical sun; the food consists of beans and salted cow-meat; the men sleep in tents upon the malarious earth, tormented by mosquitoes and poisonous flies; for the sick there are neither doctors nor remedies; the sick even are compelled to work; such as refuse are shot down with revolver or rifle.

A worker and a mule died upon the same day through fatigue and privation. Man and beast were buried in the same grave.

The company having reserved the monopoly of all provisions, sell these to their employees at a price four times in excess of that of the market. At the end of a month every worker is in debt to the contractors. And these crimes are perpetrated with the silent consent of the Republican Government.

The editor of *O Bauri*, a journal published in the town of that name—the first junction on the line of the North-Western Railway of Brazil—has been threatened with death for having denounced the crimes of this powerful company. It is necessary that the Libertarian Press, by every means at its disposal, should prevent the emigration of workers to Brazil, where slavery, torture and death await them.

TO THE TOILERS.

Come, dear toilers, stained and weary,
Come and help the world grow cheery,
Come from out your prison dreary,
Built by greed;

You who labour heavy-laden,
Slaving mother, trampled maiden,
Ever preached to, ever preyed on,
In your need;

Let your winters grow no colder,
Rise at last and dare be bolder,
Setting shoulder firm to shoulder
For a thrust!

Yokes be eased, and burdens lighter,
As the great Hope warms the fighter,
And the broad New Day grows brighter
And more just.

—L. S. BEVINGTON.

THE ANARCHIST INTERNATIONAL.

A LAST APPEAL.

Our first appeal published last October *re* the organisation of the International Congress which should have taken place in the current year, brought only very few answers.

Meanwhile, time is getting short.

We find ourselves obliged to address a few plain words to our comrades and to tell them that it is of no use to constitute organisations, if these have to remain on paper and not become a living and acting reality.

We have no need to discuss here with those comrades who disbelieve in the possibility or usefulness of a general and permanent organisation amongst the Anarchists of different countries. They are within their rights in not caring about an initiative which they don't like—although they could have profited from a meeting of comrades which, without binding them otherwise, would give them the opportunity to defend their opinions and become more acquainted with the opinion of others.

But those who initiated, or who hailed with enthusiasm the idea of an Anarchist International, ought to have tried their best that this International should live with a prosperous and useful life.

One should therefore convene everywhere and without delay, by the initiative of those who are interested in it, all comrades and propose them to adhere to the International, if they have not done so already, and to decide as to the questions concerning the coming Congress. All approved resolutions should then be communicated to us as soon as possible, so that we may take them into consideration in the preparation of the Congress and the determination of date and place of meeting.

Remember the decisive importance which this Congress must have for the Anarchist International.

It is, in reality, a question of life and death.

To continue a worn-out life, without real effect on the development of the propaganda and Anarchist action, would be worse than useless. It will be for the Congress to see whether the hour has really come for a concerted action between the Anarchists of all countries, and how to realise such action.

The question of principle was settled—for the adherents, at any rate—at the Amsterdam Congress. It is time now to act—and the sooner, the better.

Let us not forget, either, that the question of the Congress is intimately connected with that of the Bureau: If no Congress will be held this year, if comrades do not answer to our repeated appeals for a stronger agitation for the enlargement of the A. I. and for the common and more systematic action of the Anarchists of all countries, the Bureau has no more its *raison d'être*, and becomes, by the fact of its members' passivity, a platonic organisation, without special ideal, without real value, and consequently non-existent.

The existence of the Bureau, as it is now composed, ceases formally on September 1st, 1909, the nominal date of the next Congress.

It goes without saying that, if comrades from all parts find premature a Congress during the current year, but if, at the same time, they promise us their material and moral aid; if they try to give more life and activity to the International, if they take themselves energetically to the organisation of Anarchist forces into groups and federations—strengthening in this way the Anarchist International and giving to the Correspondence Bureau the possibility of being the bond between all those groups and federations; if the comrades would undertake this most necessary work in the Anarchist ranks, the Correspondence Bureau, as it is at present composed, would not refuse to continue to work until the next Congress, and would take an active part in this work of organisation without which the Anarchist propaganda will continually suffer.

But if, at this last appeal which we issue to-day, comrades do not answer in this sense, and leave the A. I. and the Correspondence Bureau to their own fate, our position will become more and more untenable and we shall be glad to see the approach of September 1st, when, relieved of our mandate received in Amsterdam, we shall get rid of a ridiculous burden which might have otherwise been, if wished so by the comrades, an agreeable duty and a work to which we would have always been ready to give our best energies.

It is our last appeal. To those of you who stand for the Anarchist organisation, belongs the last word. We await it, hoping still that at the eleventh hour you will understand the capital importance of putting into practice the principle of organisation, and the absolute necessity of reacting against the apathy which seems to have overtaken all our groups at the present moment.

To work, comrades, and the sooner—the better.

THE CORRESPONDENCE BUREAU.

E. MALATESTA, R. ROCKER, A. SCHAPIRO, J. TURNER, J. WILQUET.

MILITARISM IN FRANCE.

BY ARISTIDE PRATELLE.

In the verdant meadows and beautiful fields, in the balmy, shady, silent, august forest, on the rich pasture of the mountain slopes, along the bracing shores of the immense sea, in the giant, overwhelming uproar of the active cities, in the solitude of studios and laboratories, schools and observatories, or down in the dark, mysterious abysses underground, thousands of young men are toiling and acting, and creating life. Many of these grown-up children have just reached twenty years of age, and now they look at life on the bright side. They are at the romantic period of their existence, at the very moment when we are ready to sacrifice ourselves for liberty and justice. They are at that age when their strength, skill, knowledge or intelligence could be of immense profit for humanity, when they are the most fit to sow the seed or reap the harvest, when they could prove most beneficial in traffic and industry, arts and sciences, inventions or discoveries. They are at the very period when their own development, their own happiness, would contribute immensely to the progress and happiness of mankind. By applying themselves to the welfare of the community they could alter and organise life on the surface of this planet, and meliorate and embellish it in a wonderful manner.

At first sight, it would naturally be thought that if this is not yet the state of things in countries where the old forms of despotism still exist, such is the case in those Republics where the Rights of Man are written in bold letters in the Constitutional law. It would be thought that such is the situation at least in these countries where citizens gave their lives by thousands to conquer liberty. Let us see how the community deals with its male adolescents in that beautiful promised land of the French Revolution.

Just at that happy age when the human being reaches his plenitude, an unrelenting voice says to him, "Young man, I want your flesh and blood; I want your most enjoyable years, your years of manhood and virility. Give me these years, and give me your personality at the same time. The defence of the Motherland requires this immolation. Be proud to sacrifice yourself for her."

And with no pride at all, but with an immense grief and sorrow, the young man gives his happy years passively, because he cannot possibly refuse to give them. With great care, that Moloch called Militarism examines his biceps, feels his muscles, sniffs up the odour of his flesh, and if he appears as sound as a roach, he is at once stamped as flesh fit for the "Service," awaiting the day when it will be fit for the field of battle. Then, by a tyrannic law stronger than his will, he feels himself snatched away from his free life of the years before, from his friends and his family, from his sweetheart, his wife, and sometimes his children. By an inexorable iron hand, he feels his body pushed forward into those ugly barracks, and on entering there he has a sensation of being buried alive in a dungeon or gaol of the Middle Ages.

Passing the fatal gate, the conscript abandons his will, his intelligence, his initiative, all his manhood; he is no longer a human being, but a machine, a mere automaton who is forbidden to act or move except when ordered by his superiors. As soon as he has buckled on his regimentals, the new recruit hears only threats of punishments of all possible kinds: guardroom, gaol, disciplinary battalion, even death. At the end of the first day he looks already stunned and stupid. And it is only the beginning of the taming process. By a graduated training, the soldier will be compelled to perform a quantity of foolish and meaningless exercises: to raise his arms, turn his arms, his legs, his head, and so on. In a hippodrome, a dog or a horse is mastered just in the same way. Here, instead of a cowboy, the tamer is a man with red or gold stripes on his sleeve. Instead of a mild-hearted, benevolent friend, he is a brute whose will is as absolute as that of an African despot.

When, after the terrible months of the first winter, the preparatory training is accomplished, when the man has performed thousands of these machine-like movements for the sake and glory of the Mother-country, when this idiotic drilling has deprived him sufficiently of his individuality and stamped his temper with indelible submissiveness,—then he is given a gun. "Take this firearm," they say to him; and the man takes it. "Present!" and he holds his gun. "Fire!" and he shoots at the aim he is ordered to. His will, conscience, and dignity being withdrawn from him little by little, the man will become what is called "a good soldier"—that is to say, a wild beast, always ready to kill and be killed without understanding the reason why. The manual exercise stimulates the desire to murder to an extreme degree. An opportunity may appear, and the ancestral brute, sleeping in the depths of his own self, will awake, and blindly he will use his arms and strike before him.

To tire out the brains, thews, and sinews of a young man, to destroy all will and understanding, all thoughts contrary to discipline and hierarchy, such is the aim of the military training. A thinking soldier is dangerous for the social privileges, and everything has been contrived to remedy this evil. Between the tiresome and mechanical exercises, the aimless walks in the frost, the snow, the mud, amidst the rain or thunderstorm, or under the deadly summer sun, a good deal of leisure time remains to be spent. Will, then, the man be allowed to read or write or amuse himself in an intelligent manner? Not in the least. Crouched on a bench, here a man sweats and whines while

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rubbing the leather of his belt. With a broken bit of glass, another scrapes energetically the steps of the staircase or the sticky railings. While receiving the bundle of garments worn by a score of predecessors, the soldier is ordered to keep a glittering cap-shade and shiny buttons. In the dormitory the beds must be made in the orthodox way—that is to say, as square as a billiard-table. The garments are to be set in order by sizes. The soles of the spare boots must be blacked without putting an atom of blacking on the nails' heads, and so on. All that is to be seen, and only what is to be seen, must be rubbed and furbished up vigorously. As to the remainder, what is not visible at first sight is not worth touching. This is the very symbol of militarism. Everything outside looks shiny. Everything inside is rotten.

Many other works of that kind are equally noble, intelligent, and enjoyable. Here, this man cleans up the water-closets. There, that one picks up the flints of the courtyard one by one and flings them into a wheelbarrow. Awaiting patiently the chimeric day when stripes will be sewn on his sleeve, the soldier receives a broom, a pair of wooden shoes, and a curry-comb for the horses. Just as if he were a donkey, the "hero" must be loaded up with burdens of straw, wooden shoes, mattresses, watch-coats, pouches, and platters. All day long and all the year long, it is the same useless, vulgar, and brutalising work, in perpetual self-denial. It is abject toil following abject toil, using up body and depressing spirit; it is the hard work of galley-slaves, the slave-work of negroes, with this difference, that it is ten times cheaper than negro handwork, and that, contrary to the latter, it is duly approved by people who take off their hats when the Hymn of Liberty resounds in their ears.

Out of the barracks, the "bleu" who may feel reluctant to enter the saloon "beuglant" or brothel will no doubt be unable to resist for long the tempting pleasures of the town. They are, so to speak, close at hand. And really no one will have the right to blame him for his bad conduct. After the ridiculous pantomimes of the day, the man is sick, empty-headed, and feels strongly desirous of forgetting the disgusting lessons he has learnt. In the saloon, some pitiful servant girl will attract the privates by dozens, just as a bitch attracts a pack of dogs; and just like dogs, the men will vie and fight to conquer the female prey. In the "beuglant" the men will enjoy listening to erotic and obscene songs, bawled by women of a vulgar type in low-necked dresses. Out of this smoky place, they will set sail for the brothel. After a few hours spent in that den, a soldier feels more or less stunned and tipsy. When he goes out, he may fall on his comrades, or even on the passers-by, and injure them with his arms. His masters are brutish beasts. They teach him assassination and bestiality. Do you want him to avoid the logical consequences of his military training?

This is not enough, however, and many other elements contribute to hasten the moral degradation and physical decay of the "servant of the country." Inside the barracks, the absolute lack of hygiene will help to wreck his health, and very often kill him in a few days. During the past year, at the garrison of Versailles an enormous number of soldiers were down with typhus, scarlet fever, measles, and mumps. After an inquiry made by the Minister, it was found that there was no pipe for drinkable water in the barracks where the dragoons and artillerymen were confined. It was midwinter, and the Minister being about to come, fires were lit in some of the rooms. It was an exceptional attention, for usually no fire was made in the rooms during the winter. At Rueil and Saint-Cloud the situation was just the same. The buildings at Saint-Cloud are in a pitiful condition. The casemates at Rueil are absolutely ruined. Everywhere the most elementary rules of hygiene remain unobserved.

A bad condition of the buildings is the general state of things in the French Army. With their walls full of cracks, and their dark, gloomy fronts, most of the barracks are only fit to be pulled down as ruins. Situated in the centre of our cities, they are often old disused convents or ancient quarters of the Royal troops, the walls having been merely whitewashed and coaltarred. In these cramped, unsuitable edifices, where vermin and epidemics flourish all the year round, the men are huddled together in hundreds as herrings are packed in a barrel. Look into the mess for a moment. Here, clothes and leathers, boots and firearms, even bread, are mingled together in an extraordinary confusion. Here during six months of the year the beds are full of bugs in hundreds, the air is stifling and pestilent, and there are neither blinds nor shutters to protect the men from the sultry glare of the sun. During the remaining six months the men are shivering with cold, and they have only ancient stoves with which to warm themselves. These red-hot furnaces irradiate their oppressive heat only at a short distance, and poison the rooms by exhaling streams of oxide of carbon. Here and there oil lamps diffuse a vague and malodorous light. As to the water, it becomes a precious liquid, parsimoniously distributed as it is by taps that often stand in need of repairing.

As to the quality of the food, the recent disclosures regarding the spoilt meat sold to the French Army are absolutely typical. For years and years it was well known among the soldiers that the "bidoche" which was given them was of the lowest quality, but never before has such a bundle of facts been gathered together to condemn both the contractors and the heads of the Army. Lastly, in reading the French dailies, these disclosures seemed to be documents for an additional chapter of "The Jungle." Some sausage stuff was found to be composed of hamstrings, sinews, scrapings mixed with flour; and the mixture was found to contain so small a quantity of genuine pork that it can be considered as non-existent. Some other sausage was found to be putrefied. Old horses were sold as pork. Tubercular meat was

accepted in many places. The contractors supplied it at very low prices, and in their greed for money they sold meat which was a dreadful vehicle of infectious diseases.

We can understand now the reason why the sum total of mortality is 130 per cent. higher in our Army than in the German Army; why the number of tubercular men is 300 per cent. more among our soldiers than among the German soldiers; why in the course of twenty years there have been forty thousand more deaths in our ranks than on the other side of the Rhine. In April, 1904, Dr. Lowenthal wrote the following lines in *La Revue*: "Our Army, which ought to be a school of health and hygiene, constitutes, on the contrary, one of the most powerful factors of the enfeebled physique and depopulation of our country by the enormous list of deaths and diseases, and, above all, by the considerable number of emaciated, infirm, and worn-out men of every description that it turns out every year." These lines, which were a truism five years ago, are still a truism to-day, and will remain a truism as long as the military Moloch reigns insolently over our Republic.

As we see now, everything is managed in the French Army in order that the virile youth may become a mere ruin after a few years. Brutes and slaves they want, and cowards also; thieves and criminals! What will become of the manhood of that wretched creature who is compelled to obey all day long, and for days and days, the whims and stupid commands of a wicked despot; to obey without a whisper, a look, a gesture of revolt; to keep his temper perpetually, and to remain in perpetual fright in case any motion of his disagrees with his master? In reality, no soldier is secure from blame.

The soldier is a legalised thief, I say, and the facts that prove it are manifold. In September, 1906, at La Rochelle, the bakers had struck, with a view to compel their employers to apply the Sunday Rest Law. Soldiers were called in, and they worked as bakers in the place of the strikers. In that same year, during the postmen's strike at Paris, soldiers were ordered to sort and distribute the mails in the place of the postmen. As soon as a conflict of importance between Labour and Capital springs up, every time that the French workers try to get some improvement of their miserable fate by striking, the Government never hesitates. It sends its troops to help the masters against their slaves, and paralyses the movement by mounting guard around yards and factories. Every time that some public services are menaced, such as railways, posts, or navigation; every time that the production of things of necessity has been stopped by the workers; every time that there is the chance of a victory for them in their struggle for their rights, the soldiers are called to take the place of the revolted, and, passive as a flock of sheep, the sons of the workers accept that vile rôle and shamelessly take away the living of their fathers. Owing to that intimidation produced in the ranks of the workers by the sight of the guns, owing to that legalised blacklegging, the robberies and rascalities of the employers are always triumphant for the sake and glory of Capitalism.

In fact, it is more against the "enemies" of public order inside than against the "enemies of the Fatherland" outside that our conscripts are recruited, trained, and directed. All day long and all the year long they hear of the beauties of the Mother-country, and the necessity of defending it from the ambitious and barbarous neighbours, and so on. But when the wrath of the helots inside begins to be kindled, as soon as the flame of revolt begins to spring up, when the frightened capitalists desire that "public order" and the "liberty of working" be secured by force, then police and troops are mobilised against the starving workers, and woe to these if they only try to touch the privileges of their masters. A curious spectacle, is it not? Brothers dressed in uniform rushing upon brothers dressed in blouses; brothers who serve as a bodyguard to the enemies who repress the ardours and maintain the bondage of their brothers; brothers who, obeying a sign, a whistle, or a single word, may aim at their brothers and shoot them down mercilessly. A capital invention, indeed, to train and maintain the character of our youths to the level of the brutish beast!

Not only does there exist here a perfect understanding between Capital and State for the maintenance of the system, but striking facts demonstrated lately that a touching spirit of fraternity is shown between capitalists and Governments of all countries when they want to crush a rebellion against their mutual interests. In a number of *La Voix du Peuple* issued in February, 1906, there was a drawing by Grandjouan representing French, German, and Luxemburgian soldiers and gendarmes grouped together and surrounding a striker in the Longwy strike. The scene had been drawn by the artist from a photograph. For safeguarding privileges and repressing revolts, there exist no frontiers, no Fatherlands; there are no antagonistic nations and peoples.

(To be concluded.)

WANTED.—Jean Grave's "Moribund Society and Anarchy" (English translation).—Letters, stating price and condition, to "Manager," FREEDOM Office.

WANTED.—"Commonweal," Nos. 20 and 25 (1886).—Letters, stating price, to be sent to "Manager," FREEDOM Office.

MOTHER EARTH.

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INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

France.

No strike in recent years has been followed with keener interest, has caused a greater panic among or been a better object-lesson to the bourgeoisie, than that of the telegraphists and postal employees in Paris, which, beginning on March 12, ended ten days later with the satisfaction of the strikers' demands. Briefly, discontent had been rampant for months throughout the postal administration, due chiefly to the unpopularity of the Under-Secretary of State, M. Simyan, who, like most Government officials, unable to let well alone, had introduced new and arbitrary rules, especially one curtailing promotion, in an aggressive manner peculiar to himself. Finding that their demands were treated with contempt and indifference, the telegraphists were the first to make a move towards direct action by sending a deputation to the Minister. The postmen had started street demonstrations that same day in an orderly manner; fraternising with the telegraphists, and hearing of their deputation, they decided to send one of their own forthwith, but were met by Lépine and his men when approaching Simyan's office, with the result of a fierce collision, brutal police charges, and many arrests, Simyan himself in some cases indicating supposed ringleaders. Large meetings of all the postal employees at once took place, and on the 15th the telegraphists, though they entered their department, refused to work, as a protest against the arrests. Simyan, instead of rising to the occasion and behaving in a conciliatory manner, stormed in amongst them with Lépine at his side, the very sight of whom raised an explosion. In spite of this, both officials threatened with expulsion all who refused to resume work. In answer, every telegraphist simply put on his hat and left the building. A strike was instantly proclaimed, and hour by hour was followed by others, every class and grade of worker in the Post Office Department throwing in his lot with his comrades, the telephone girls being especially enthusiastic over this splendid display of direct action and solidarity.

Within twenty-four hours Paris was cut off from the world, and several of the larger French cities soon found themselves in a like plight owing to strikes of sympathy in their respective postal departments. The resignation of the detested Simyan was made the sole basis for a resumption of work. "Go back to your duties and we will arrange that afterwards," returned Clemenceau. Luckily, though this was the first great strike among Government functionaries, they remained firm, and after some days of struggle and bluster, the Government was forced, in word at least, to give in. The resignation promised, also a thorough sifting of other grievances, men and women at once returned to their posts.

The next day the Strike Committee posted up a placard thanking the public for their patience and sympathy, and asserting that the postal employees no longer recognised Simyan as their chief. The last clause provoked Government criticism, with the result that an investigation into the authorship of the poster was ordered with a view to punishment. This greatly incensed the men, as they stated that the words merely conveyed the truth—if the Government's promises were to be trusted—for the Minister was to resign. Strike Committees for all branches of the service were at once organised in many districts, and very little would have aroused a second mutiny. The Government, however, fearing another defeat, hastily climbed down, and announced that no further steps would be taken in the matter.

Such, in brief, is the history of this remarkable affair. But how measure its wider issues? What a lesson to the rulers and autocrats of the world as to the power of the people when they choose to assert themselves! The entire energies of a Government and bourgeoisie, of capital and exploitation, were paralysed in face of the revolt and solidarity of a few hundred specialised workers. Wherever the disturbance was greatest, Lépine shouted, "It is the work of Anarchists!" a dictum which aroused great indignation among these hitherto dutiful functionaries, though this direct action they put into practice is and has long been the recognised Anarchist war-cry. The Anarchist is as willing to work as others, yea, more so, for he holds that all men, rich and poor alike, should work if worthy of the name; but, he adds, "When exploited and sat upon, throw off the incubus, put on your hat and walk away. Even if you gain nothing by it, if your just demands are still withheld, at least you have proved yourself a man and not a chattel." The late uprising of State employees in France has resulted in the State being beaten in its first pitched battle with its confederated servants. But though it takes its beating quietly, it is alert to the danger-signal. It refuses to pay the salaries due during the cessation of postal work (which is not wholly unnatural), and its press is already pointing out means to nip direct action in the bud. The prohibition of State strikers' mass meetings is mooted, military occupation of Labour Exchanges in moments of revolt, the prohibition of strike placards, the arrest of all who affix such posters, and the postponement of old-age and other pensions to State employees taking part in strikes. But we think and hope that the State employees of France, having tasted blood, will not be likely in future to take things lying down.

Holland.

A strike among the unemployed sounds somewhat of an anomaly—but it is occurring in Amsterdam. Large funds were raised by a bourgeois committee, and work upon some of the city's waste lands was offered a considerable number of the men. Sixty of these were

members of a Navy's Union, and the wages offered being under 5d. an hour they refused to work, and thus make a precedent of taking lower payment than they, as Unionists, were accustomed to. The city's committee has been employing derelict tailors, hairdressers, etc., to replace the strikers, and much bitter feeling is being displayed on both sides, the police being called in to keep the peace.

Portugal.

The workers, and especially the peasantry, of this country are almost wholly uneducated. They have therefore hitherto been completely under the thumb of the politicians and authorities. Now, however, most happily, a new spirit is slowly pervading the proletariat. They are beginning to see that the politician's vote, whatever it has brought to him, has never benefitted them, and consequently the Trade Unions now beginning to spring up everywhere in Portugal have a strong non-political bias, and prefer independence in action to crass obedience to Parliamentary leaders. The Antimilitarists are also looking up, and expect soon to start a bi-monthly paper of their own.

South Africa.

Comrade Glasse fully endorses the sinister news that leaks out here and there in an English paper, when its editor is impelled to write the truth concerning this portion of the Empire. "Things are still very bad out here," our comrade states, "the only encouraging fact being that after 20 months of drought copious rains have fallen." Those who are trying to live on the land have had "heart-breaking losses" owing to climatic conditions. The general distress, moreover, is responsible for the cessation of the *Cape Socialist*, which ceased publication some time ago. Its editor, Comrade Needham, has been forced to return with his family to Tasmania, owing to the bad times. He appears to have been a splendid worker in furthering the cause in South Africa, and as his parting lecture at Cape Town was on the Chicago Martyrs, it would seem he was also a man of a sympathetic nature and liberal ideas, since the Martyrs are usually dubbed Anarchists. The Cape Socialists still keep up their organisation and hall, though they have lost their paper. If times are hard for men, however, there seems an increasing demand for those female beasts of burden—domestic servants—from £3 to £5 a month being offered as wages—though Anarchists, we presume, need not apply!

Canada.

In Montreal, as elsewhere, there has been bitter distress this winter through unemployment. In their Labour Hall militant Socialists have held various meetings, both of protest and discussion, over the supineness of the authorities. Finally, the resignation of the Mayor was to be formally demanded, as having shown gross incapacity in handling the situation. Comrade Boulay capped this with a lecture on Antimilitarism in French—which must have wrung the withers of his worthy citizen compatriots in this the "fortress of Canadian Catholicism and capital." The lecturer, according to a Government paper, was loudly applauded, and his exposition of the organisation, aim, and especially the consequences of militarism, attentively followed.

PROPAGANDA NOTES.

[Reports of the Movement are specially invited, and should be sent in not later than the 25th of each month.]

MANCHESTER.

On Tuesday evening, March 16, at the Clarion Café, Manchester, there came into existence a new society, viz., "The Free Socialists." The object of this group of people is "To investigate the best means of realising a Free Society." Some of us are convinced Anarchists, some others Socialists eager to learn of the difference between the State Socialist and the Anarchist. As not all were convinced of the principles of Anarchism, we considered a name embracing them would scarcely be fitting. We at present are content with arranging weekly discussions among ourselves. Have no rules whatever, only a sort of mutual understanding that there shall be perfect freedom of action for each member of the group. We are in our meetings, at least, trying to put one, and that perhaps the greatest, principle of Anarchism into practice. We have no permanent officials. Rachel Goodstone was asked to look after FREEDOM and other literature, and I to act as secretary. We got through our business at the inaugural meeting without a chairman, yet was there order and the best of good feeling. As one of our members said, "We are a tolerant and broad-minded lot of people." May we remain such is the sincere wish of

BESSIE WARD.

197 Grey Mare Lane, Openshaw, Manchester.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

Just a few lines regarding the movement here. After a long standstill in the propaganda, the Anarchists have opened a Communist Club so that those Socialists who have lost their faith in Parliamentary action, such as Revolutionists, Industrialists, and others, shall be able to work together with us. We hold indoor and outdoor meetings, and sell Anarchist literature. Our outdoor meetings are very successful, our speakers giving very good expositions of Anarchism and Direct

Action, pointing out the futility of political action. We generally get a good crowd; on two occasions our speakers have drawn away the whole audience from the speaker and organiser for the Newcastle Socialist Society. The speaker got very angry, and came down from his platform and left the public ground. At the Club during the week we have very hot discussions on Anarchism. Every Thursday night Comrade Tyas conducts a speakers' class, with the object of developing new speakers. Each member of the class reads a certain portion of an Anarchist pamphlet, which is afterwards discussed by other members of the class, which gives very good results. We hope that with the arrival of the summer we shall be able to spread our ideal of Anarchism in a much wider circle. Our Communist Club is at 77A Blackett Street. All comrades heartily welcomed. H. RUBIN.

CANNING TOWN.

Comrades in this district are requested to meet at Beckton Road on Sunday, April 11, from 11.30 to 12.30 and from 6.30 to 8.30, for propaganda. Speakers who are willing to help are asked to send word to me at 10 Gordon Road, Manor Park, E. F. GOULDING.

East London Anarchist-Socialist Sunday School.

The East London Anarchist-Socialist Sunday School meets at 3.30 every Sunday at the Workers' Friend Club and Institute, 163 Jubilee Street, Mile End. Children in the district invited. An Esperanto class for adults and children is specially conducted by Comrade Dusa.

Liverpool Communist Sunday School.

Once again we have new premises—I.L.P. Rooms, 1 Clarendon Terrace, Beaumont Street (enter gate almost opposite Alt Street). We meet every Sunday at 3 p.m. Come and spend an hour with the children.

Canning Town Group.

Meetings are held at the corner of Beckton Road every Sunday at 11.30 and 6.30. Speakers heartily welcomed.

PHOTOGRAPH OF MARIE SPIRIDONOVA.

This photograph of the Russian heroine, whose horrible tortures caused such a sensation, was taken in prison. It is on good paper and suitable for mounting. Price 2d., postage (in cardboard roll) 1d. extra for any number. Quantities 1s. 6d. per dozen post-free.

MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(March 5—March 31.)

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