

Freedom

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MONTHLY; ONE PENNY

NOTES.

Briand, Lepine and Co.

These are the men who are ruling France at the present moment: the great strike has proved it, and for that reason, if for no other, may have some educational value for the workers. Briand, the political adventurer and traitor to the people, has thrown in his lot with the ruling classes, as *all* politicians must do if they wish to retain power. No one, not even his friends the railway directors, is deceived by his lies about the strike leaving the country open to an invasion of the enemy. That was an appeal to the patriotism which, as we know, is "the last resource of a scoundrel." As a matter of fact, the men made some very modest demands—demands which for more than a year had been utterly ignored by the companies. And only when the strike assumed its most serious aspect did the directors suddenly announce their intention of conceding the five francs per day in certain districts. Briand's lies cannot alter that fact. Small though it may be, it is a point in favour of the General Strike. Another point is the panic of the Government and the bourgeois. They do not take fright like this at the *votes* of the workers; they know the game is still in their hands. But for the men to lay down their tools, to refuse to serve their masters at a starvation wage! Then it is time to declare war on them, to call in St. Lépine and arrest the leaders; in fact, to give the only answer Government ever gives when the workers claim a little—ever so little—of their own: force, brutality, bloodshed. And Briand, Millerand, Lépine—what a trinity to stand for Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.

Illegal Murder.

The Crippen trial is over, and the lust of revenge is only awaiting the final act to fill its measure to the brim. A Christian court, a Christian jury, and a Christian country are crying for the blood of this man. There need be no suggestion that Crippen is to die as an example to others. Anyone who has heard men talk about this case knows that such an idea does not enter the heads of the majority, whose passions are fed by a sensational Press. The basest feelings have been aroused, and once more the country has been deluged with details of brutality which must have a disastrous effect in the end. In fact, hardly has the echo of the sentence on Crippen died away in our ears than we have the horror of two murders, *both actuated by motives of revenge*, perpetrated almost within a stone's throw, one might say, of the neighbourhood of the Crippen crime. How can it be otherwise? The *Star*, a respectable, Christian evening paper, boasts that on the final day of the Crippen case when the verdict was given, it sold over a million copies. Try to imagine the morbid effect on the mental condition of the neurotic and ill-balanced individuals who would surely be found amongst this number! Such an orgie of crime and revenge as we have passed through lately would mean the moral suicide of a nation were it not that amongst us we have an intelligent minority who are working for the abolition of capital punishment. But the progress of the idea is too slow. As Bernard Shaw truly says, England is below the level of Continental nations in this question.

Legal Murder.

It would seem that whether killing is murder or not depends very much upon how it is carried out. In other words, there is such a thing as legal murder, which the law does not touch. We are not speaking for the moment of the sacrifice of life and limb in the coal mines and on the railways, but of the wilful destruction

of human life for the most sordid motives of greed of gain. The Lancashire mill owner is an old offender. His wealth has been positively ground out of the lives of women and children. In the early part of last century he had it all his own way, and no Jack the Ripper ever perpetrated such horrors as one can read of in the factories and the mines of those days. Although his claws have been clipped during the past fifty years, his conscience has not improved; for he is still content to exploit to an extent that involves as a consequence an enormous infant mortality. A writer in the *Daily News* explains it as follows:—"Just so long as the Lancashire girl enters the mill at twelve years old and remains there after her marriage at, say, twenty, and during all the years she is bearing children; and just as long as the babies are carried out at 5.30 every morning to be put in the charge of incompetent persons for the rest of the day, fed on diluted Swiss or half-sour cow's milk out of sticky, filthy bottles, pacified by dummy teats dipped in soothing syrup, just so long as these things go on will the infant mortality percentage in Lancashire be what it is." But all this is so common, and people are so deeply interested in cases of the Crippen type, that these wholesale murders, for which capitalism is responsible, pass unheeded.

The Policy of "Patching Up."

The fact that the most influential leaders of trade unions will not recognise the absolute antagonism of interests between masters and men, and devote themselves to patching up quarrels to avoid strikes, is really inflicting more suffering and hardship on the men in the long run than the bitter struggle of a strike would bring. For one thing, the men themselves feel after all these miserable parleyings that the strike has to be gone through. For many months the South Wales miners have been working with the black cloud of the strike or the lock-out hovering over them. Again and again have the leaders come preaching patience to the men, who are chafing under the injustice and insolence of the masters. They have held the men back during the summer months, when the women and children could better face the struggle; and now that we are on the edge of winter, when the masters can force up prices and work off their summer reserves, the cloud seems to have broken and 30,000 men are already on strike. The Press and interested persons will blame the men for the increase in the cost of fuel, while the owners and merchants will line their purses even as the men starve. It is pitiable that the men should be so "led"; it is a scandal that the leaders should so deliberately play the masters' game. One wonders what is at the back of it all, and the men should not forget that valuable advice—"Watch your leaders."

Unemployed Teachers.

No one would deny the usefulness of people who help the young to acquire such an education as is possible under present conditions. Of course, the training of teachers and their methods of instruction are often both absurd and pernicious from an Anarchist or, let us say, a common sense point of view. But that is no reason why they should be left to starve, while the reactionaries are sweating the over-worked teacher in the schools, who often has the futile task of trying to instruct a class of from sixty to eighty pupils. It would seem impossible that any self-respecting person could follow such a profession, when it is obvious that the schools are at present almost entirely given over to the Army and the Church. While the workers have been indifferent, education has been seized upon by the reactionaries, and the sinister gentlemen in black have re-established the doctrine of hell fire to prevent the growth of Socialism! The starchy young people who now find themselves unemployed, instead of sneering at the working man, as they so often have, would be wise to ask themselves the question whether a revolution is not just as much needed to save them as it is to do justice to the common labourer.

ERNEST CŒURDEROY.

Ernest Cœurderoy: Œuvres, Tome I., "Jours d'Exil" (Days of Exile), première partie, 1849-51. Paris: P.-V. Stock, éditeur, 155 rue Saint-Honoré. 3fr. 50c. Tomes II. and III. in preparation.

The literary output of present-day Anarchist writers is so large that it requires some knowledge of the history of Anarchism to understand how extremely small in numbers and isolated Anarchist authors were fifty or sixty years ago, and how welcome the rediscovery of these forgotten forerunners is to those who have enough leisure for historical studies. But scarcity alone cannot create a general interest in an author; if, however, such an early writer turns out to be a hidden mine of bold and generous ideas, expressed with artistic beauty and an unusual depth and energy of feeling, he can well claim anew the attention of modern readers, and from such reasons Cœurderoy's principal work is now published in a full reprint of the original French text (1854-55), preceded by a biography and the author's only known portrait.

Cœurderoy's name, though occurring in Benoit Malon's books, in the "Bibliographie de l'Anarchie," and in the literary supplement of the *Révolution*, is so little known that the question will be raised: why has this author, who brought out six Anarchist publications from 1852 to 1855, been hardly taken notice of by his contemporaries in the "fifties," and why was he ignored by the Anarchist movement beginning in the later "sixties," which, in unbroken continuation, is the basis and origin of the present movement in all countries? Cœurderoy, a French political refugee of 1849, had raised his voice against authority under all its forms, including the Republican and Socialist authorities among the proscribed of his time; hence his writings fell under the great ban of all parties, and he had to lead the life of "an exile within exile." He did not care to attract followers, but he knew that a time would come when his ideas would be appreciated, and I think this time has come. He had to leave one country after the other, from 1849 to 1855, and after this year he disappears even from our notice until the time of his tragical death in 1862. Add to this that what remained of his scattered writings was stored away, and finally burned by his own mother. The result is that of his six separate publications only about 55 copies in all are known to exist to-day. They were remembered by a few broader-minded Socialists of the "fifties," who might have recalled their existence to the new generation at the time of the International, but somehow they did not do this. Neither Talandier, nor Herzen, nor Elie Reclus appear to have mentioned Cœurderoy to Bakunin, when he returned from prison and exile. It is true Cœurderoy was near his death then, in 1862, and Bakunin called for living energies, and had no time to spare on literary reminiscences. To some of us, however, who candidly admit that they are not always carried away headlong by revolutionary impulse, and that they can spare time for a good book, these works will be a source of intellectual and artistic pleasure.

Ernest Cœurderoy, the last of an ancient family of Burgundy, born in 1825 in Avallon, and brought up at Tonnerre (Yonne), the son of a doctor of Republican ideas, studied medicine in Paris, and, to finish his studies, became after 1846 house surgeon in several of the largest Paris hospitals, which meant hard work for the young lover of Nature and outdoor sport. Coercive education and the daily contact with the exhausted poor, whose last stage of martyrdom was the hospital, roused his feelings of revolt, but also depressed him terribly. The revolution of February, 1848, at last gave him new life and hope. He spoke in the clubs, came to the front in the students' movement (*Comité des Ecoles*), and was elected to the large committee of some two hundred Democrats and Socialists, who selected the advanced candidates for the Paris elections, and were the centre of resistance against the reactionary forces in power after the June massacre of the proletariat. Cœurderoy at that time attended the wounded and dying insurgents in the central popular hospital, the Hôtel Dieu, and had to defend them against the inquisitive magistrates and police, who hovered round to spy and disturb the last moments of the dying. From this time certainly dates his absolute horror and hatred of the State, Government, and all its tools, and of the bourgeois class who alone profit by the existing system. He became a member of the inner circle of twenty-five, chosen from the large committee mentioned, but soon gave in his resignation, because, in the pledge to defend the Constitution (meaning the Republic against the reactionary attacks) which candidates nominated by the committee had to sign, the words "by armed force" were cautiously omitted. He was again elected one of the twenty-five, and this time a great task fell to this committee. Louis Bonaparte, the president, in disregard of the Constitution, sent troops to crush the Roman Republic which Mazzini, one of its triumvirs, and Garibaldi defended. The *Montagne*, the Parliamentary party led by Ledru Rollin, protested, and the committee of the twenty-five, mostly young Socialists and Radicals, did their best to make this protest take the form of revolutionary action. June 13, 1849, when the crisis took place, was a defeat of the revolutionary forces; from that day Cœurderoy was an outlaw. He escaped to Switzerland, and was, in his absence, sentenced to transportation for life.

For a time he settled in Lausanne, where he practised as a doctor; but early in 1851 he and sixteen other refugees were expelled from Switzerland for boldly claiming the right of asylum, not as charity but as a Republican right. Cœurderoy had also to leave Belgium immediately, and went to London (April, 1851), where he stayed for about two years. His contributions to papers from 1849 to 1851 are remarkable for their absence of party spirit, and the sincere desire of the

author to help to make all advanced parties co-operate against Louis Bonaparte, who slowly prepared his dastardly plot to strangle the Republic. This he achieved on December 2, 1851.

From this date the Republican and Socialist leaders and their followers were powerless, and Cœurderoy felt that, in discussing the causes of their discomfiture, he was no longer impairing the chances of a battle which was already lost. He was so naïve as to think that discussion would be welcome, but it never is. He began to write his first book, "De la Révolution dans l'Homme et dans la Société" (Revolution in Man and in Society), Brussels, 1852 (September), a comparison of the human body and society, showing the continual evolution and transformation of either, arriving at the conclusion that revolution is an inevitable and permanently recurring social phenomenon. But the follies and pretensions of all the exiled statesmen and leaders of 1848, 1849, 1851, were too much for Cœurderoy's sense of humour and his intense feeling of the greatness of the cause so poorly served by these small men. He and Octave Vauthier published, in June, 1852, "La Barrière du Combat," a pamphlet which played havoc with the stern leadership of Ledru Rollin and Louis Blanc, Cabet and Leroux, Mazzini and others. From that time Cœurderoy was proscribed. He said many things more in the concluding parts of his book, "De la Révolution," but, besides slander behind his back, ostracism of the most intolerant kind was the only reply made to him. He continued to study and to write, and worked his ideas into the many chapters of personal impressions which form the "Jours d'Exil."

He left London, where he felt very unhappy, for the glorious sun of Spain, which revived him (1853-54). Thence he travelled to London to have the first part of "Jours d'Exil" published (spring of 1854); back to Spain, where he wrote the letters reprinted as "Trois Lettres au journal *L'Homme*" (of Jersey), London, 1854 (summer); and in October of that year he published the book, "Hurrah!! ou la Révolution par les Cosaques" (Hurrah!! or Revolution by Cossacks). For his utter despair of the power of the proletariat to recuperate strength after the massacre of June, 1848, made him cry for a Russian invasion, a universal war, and a general breakdown of Western civilisation; he called upon the Cossacks as brute forces of destruction *par excellence*, having full confidence that by the action of free and conscious individuals, Anarchists in one word, freedom would arise like a phoenix out of the smouldering ruins of the Old World. He intended to sketch this evolution in a book to be called "Les Braconniers ou la Révolution par l'Individu" (The Poachers, or Revolution by the Individual); these works on *social demolition* were to be followed by a description of *Socialist Reconstruction*. The latter two books were never written or were destroyed, as all his manuscripts seem to have been.

Cœurderoy's health declined in 1854; he went to Italy and spent a winter of frightful suffering in Turin. Revived by beautiful spring days spent at Annecy in Savoy, with its picturesque lake, he married in June, 1855, at Geneva and returned to Annecy. In July he was expelled from Savoy and Piedmont, and it is not known where he passed the years following. His last chapter of "Jours d'Exil," second part, was written in November, 1855; the book itself (which will form Tomes II. and III. of our reprint) bears the date: London, December, 1855.

In 1859, by a curt letter, Cœurderoy scorned Bonaparte's amnesty; in 1862 he settled in a small village in the neighbourhood of Geneva, where in October, 1862, he cut his veins and died. Some will say that he had lost, or was then losing, his mental faculties. To me, this remains a problem and a question to be discussed in a larger biography. His great productivity from 1852 to 1855, followed by years of absolute silence, 1856 to 1862, is another problem which I am unable to solve as yet.

What, then, are his principal ideas? Who can condense fifteen hundred pages, sparkling with ideas poetically expressed, into the compass of a few words? It is sufficient to say that he looks at a great variety of subjects taken from Nature, social and political life, history, morals and habits, etc., with the eyes of a sincere Anarchist of the largest mind possible. At his time, Anarchism was freedom one and indivisible, and no economic qualifications, Communist or Individualist, cut it into sections, an exclusiveness which he would not have accepted, he who dreamed of still higher perfection, still loftier flights of freedom. Was he, then, some might guess, an Individualist? Yes and no. He was as truly a Socialist (Collectivist, I should say, though he would not have excluded Communism) as anybody ever was, but he was also a rebel against each state of things where the individual would not enjoy the fullest freedom in every sense. He aimed at the continuous improvement of all collective arrangements by making them subject to the freedom of the individual as the first condition of their right to exist, which, I take it, we are all aiming at, by freely discussing our ideas.

The "Jours d'Exil," first part, contains, among others, Cœurderoy's impressions of Paris in 1848-49, the death of Laviron (who fought for the Romans against the French), the story of the flight to Switzerland with the aid of a smuggler, the refugees' life at Geneva, spies in political movements, impressions of Alpine scenery and the heroic age of Swiss history, a striking chapter on the execution of Montcharmont, with an examination of the right to judge others, the radical students' society at Lausanne, etc.

On the contents of Tomes II. and III. of the present edition I may speak another time. Each volume can be read separately.

November 1.

M. N.

SOME QUOTATIONS.

At our very last propaganda meeting, the old question turned up: "Can you point to any period in history when society has existed without any form of government, and when at the same time progress has been made?" I take the question "as the text of a sermon which now I preach."

The man who gropes back in the past to fish out a social system and place it before us as a goal, is more reactionary than a Prime Minister. History never repeats itself. "Nothing can be as it has been before," as Browning says:—

"Why, this is the old woe of the world;
Tune, to whose rise and fall we live and die.
Rise with it then! Rejoice that man is hurl'd
From change to change unceasingly,
His soul's wings never furl'd!"

He who imagines himself a revolutionist, and yet looks back for a precedent, is simply substituting the word "revolution" for "reaction." We look into history, not expecting to find there our ideal form of society, but rather to study what have been the obstacles in our development as a race, and what have been the means by which we have overcome those difficulties. The question, then, becomes of importance if we rewrite it, and ask: "In looking back into history with its conflicting forces, do we find that those conditions which tended towards progress also tended towards the no-government or Anarchist state of society?" To this we answer an unqualified "Yes."

The timidity which leads a man to inquire if the experiment has already been tried before adopting any decisive change, will probably accompany him in all his thinking. In the world of thought, if he ever wanders outside that crowded city "Conventionality," his care for his safety will cause him constantly to look to the ground lest he should lose the well-worn path selected for his ramble. In doing so he will miss much that is beautiful. He should be exactly the reverse. In following any line of thought he should try every possible byway, thus perchance discovering realms of beauty of which he hitherto did not dream. At least, he will obtain a full knowledge of the strength of his position.

Let us, however, for once cater for the timid man, and by means of a few quotations make it clear that even the regions of Anarchist thought are at certain points within hailing distance of what are now considered quite orthodox thinkers. First, by way of showing how these quotations bear on our question, let us point out that there are two great forces in history—the power of the slave and the power of the slaveowner, the power of the men who shaped the sword and the power of the man who wielded it, the power of the men who feed the Government and the power of Government—men and the leaders of men. The former create, and the latter control that which is created, while arguing that this control is necessary to prevent the said creation (*i.e.*, production) from becoming chaos; and that therefore this control (*i.e.*, Government) becomes the headquarters of civilisation and the agent of progress.

The producers for the most part, alas! agree; but some among them answer: "Production is of itself an orderly process, and needs no external influence to prevent it from becoming chaos. *To control production means to enjoy that which is produced*, and therefore this control becomes the curse of civilisation, and only in so far as it is overthrown do we progress. For then only can the wealth of society be used to make rich the life of society, instead of being absorbed by a parasitic class." Those who say this and act on such thoughts—*i.e.*, attempt to undermine the power of Government—are Anarchists.

If, then, we could show that encroachments of the influence of Government did not lead to progress, but that the contrary was the fact, we should have made it clear that the forces in history which lead to progress do also tend towards the Anarchist position. The following quotations will be found to deal with this subject. We will begin with J. S. Mill:—

"The whole mode of thought of the modern world is, with increasing emphasis, pronouncing against the claim of society to decide for individuals what they are and are not fit for, and what they shall and shall not be allowed to attempt. If the principles of modern politics and political economy are good for anything, it is for proving that these points can only be rightly judged by the individuals themselves."

The same writer tells us in his preface to "Liberty":—

"The object of this essay is to assert one very simple principle. . . . That principle is, that the sole end for which mankind are warranted individually or collectively in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection."

T. H. Buckle says:—

"But when the evil days have set in, when the invasions of despotism have begun, liberty will be retained not by those who can show the oldest deeds and the largest charters, but by those who have been most inured to habits of independence, most accustomed to think and act for themselves, and most regardless of that insidious protection which the upper classes have always been so ready to bestow, that, in many countries, they have left nothing worth the trouble to protect."

Again:—

"The great enemy of civilisation is the protective spirit, by which

I mean the notion that society cannot prosper unless the affairs of life are watched over and protected at nearly every turn by the State and the Church; the State teaching men what they are to do, and the Church what they are to believe. Such are the propositions which I hold to be the most essential for a right understanding of history, and which I have defended in the only two ways any proposition can be defended, namely, inductively and deductively."

This last sentence for the benefit of the dialectic "scientific Socialist." So far, these attacks on Government are arguments to the effect that the controlling power in society exercises an evil influence, irrespective of whether that power is actuated by pure motives. We will now see what likelihood there may be of this. J. S. Mill says:—

"Now, it is a universally observed fact, that the two evil dispositions in question, the disposition to prefer a man's selfish interests to those which he shares with other people, and his immediate and direct interests to those which are indirect and remote, are characteristics most especially called forth and fostered by the possession of power. . . . Finding themselves worshipped by others, they become worshippers of themselves, and think themselves entitled to be counted at a hundred times the value of other people; while the facility they acquire of doing as they like without regard to consequences insensibly weakens the habits which make men look forward even to such consequences as affect themselves. This is the meaning of the universal tradition, grounded on universal experience, of men being corrupted by power."

It is not a far cry from this to Shelley's—

"Power, like a desolating pestilence, pollutes whate'er it touches."

And now we have reached Bakunin's statement:—

"It is the characteristic of privilege and of every privileged position to kill the mind and heart of men. The privileged man, whether politically or economically, is a man depraved in mind and heart. That is a social law which admits of no exception and is as applicable to entire nations as to classes, corporations, and individuals. It is the law of equality, the supreme condition of liberty and humanity."

It is, indeed, strange that these Liberals and Free Traders of the old school, having by remarkable genius and perseverance reached great truths, were unable to deduce from them the obvious political principle. Thus Mill, approaching it from various sides, arrives, as we have seen, at the conclusion that absolute freedom is essential for the individuals composing society. In this we rejoice until, alas! we find it prompts him to write a treatise on "Representative Government," in which he lays down a system of democracy, and even this qualified in such a manner as to ensure that the *superior people* shall still rule. All democrats are in reality Aristocrats.

Buckle, although certainly far in advance of poor Mill, is also involved in the same contradiction:—"The love of exercising power has been found to be so universal, that no class of men who have possessed authority have been able to avoid abusing it. To maintain order, to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, and to adopt certain precautions respecting the public health, are the only services which any Government can render to the interests of civilisation." The truth and contradiction herein need no comment. In the same paragraph we find the remark, "otherwise the nation is in a state of anarchy."

That these men should have mounted so high and yet be unable to see the view!

G. B.

The Development of Folk-Music.

The slow and tedious progress made by Church music in its striving after artistic form, even the great reforms introduced into the liturgical song by Gregory, viz., from the seventh to the thirteenth centuries, forms a strong contrast to the free and unembarrassed development of secular song among the people. The folk-songs, refrains, and roundels which accompanied all the popular dances, the tales and sagas related in epic or song-form, and the ballads and serenades of the Southern nations, although made by the people, and therefore entirely independent of scholastic theory, yet contained in themselves the germs of a rich development, which, coming into contact at a later period with the achievements of art, attained to the most gratifying results. In like manner the continuous improvements which were made in the mechanism of the organ—that sole and favoured instrument of the Church from the ninth century—improvements which we will follow as far as the sixteenth century, are in great contrast to the invention of a number of "profane" or secular instruments, either of foreign origin or the outgrowth of instruments of a most primitive nature.—NAUMANN'S "History of Music."

MODERN SCIENCE AND ANARCHISM

will be continued next month.

ANARCHY.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal.—*Century Dictionary*.

Freedom

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The Trades Union Congress.

From Copenhagen to Sheffield is a long way. Yet there was, of course, an underlying similarity of outlook at both Congresses. The Social Democratic Congress at Copenhagen was wordy, theoretical, Parliamentary—a thing of wind and dreamy enthusiasm. The Trades Union Congress at Sheffield was brief and practical, yet Parliamentary, with the sense of reserve power, unnamed but felt, in the organised industrial forces represented.

One of the strangest things connected with Labour in this country is, that there is not a single general organisation which meets to discuss the purely economic and industrial affairs of Trade Unionism. That this should be so in the home of that remarkable movement is certainly a disgrace. True, the Trades Union Congress came into existence by accident, to combat the danger of suppression by the Government after the acts of violence by Trade Unionists against blacklegs at Sheffield in the "sixties" of last century. But having learned the usefulness of combination among the Unions for defensive purposes against political aggression, one would have imagined that common sense must suggest the necessity of similar unity in the primary purpose of Trade Unionism—to defend Labour against the exploitation of Capitalism, to secure widely organised assistance in its struggle for improvement.

So far, however, this has not been done. The idea of a Federation for fighting purposes of a few years back finally resulted in the formation of the General Federation of Trade Unions. But its function is practically confined to a strike insurance scheme according to rule—a very useful thing, but one that can never excite the imagination of the workpeople, give them a lead in their continual effort to resist industrial tyranny, or help to teach them the way of final emancipation.

The annual meeting of the Federation is confined to dealing with purely internal affairs of little or no interest to the workers outside its ranks. If, after settling these among themselves, they called an open Congress to discuss those wider and extra-Parliamentary and economic questions, such as a minimum wage and maximum hours for all workers, the best methods to secure victory in the industrial struggle, and, say, the control by the workers of future mechanical inventions, or the action to be taken by the workers against war, etc., it would have a wonderful moral and economic effect. The Federation would attract wide attention, its ranks be strengthened, and it would soon be the rallying-ground of the workers in their direct fight against the whole of the privileged classes who live on their labour.

The two real objects of the Trades Union Congress are: (1) to watch all legislation affecting Labour, (2) to initiate such legislation as Congress may direct. This really confines the work of Congress to projects of Labour legislation. True, it has often travelled outside this narrow path; but it has always been in the power of those controlling the Congress to rule out all other questions. Besides, the workers themselves have not, till quite recently, thought of any general line of policy, apart from Parliamentary action.

This year's Congress has been remarkable for two things: the vehemence of the Parliamentary Labour men attending the gathering against the Osborne decision, and the overwhelming vote in favour of greater and stronger industrial unity in the ranks of organised Labour.

The question of the Osborne decision has already been dealt with in the columns of FREEDOM. And though the official Trade Unionists are trying to secure to the Unions the legal right to do

as they like with their own money, they too, as well as us, evidently feel they have now the moral right to do so; and have even gone so far as to threaten to use their funds for Parliamentary electioneering purposes and take the consequences.

As Anarchists, we sincerely believe this Parliamentary action to be almost criminal folly on the part of the workers, and that they are quite mistaken and wrong in this method of attempting to secure even some social and industrial betterment. We are convinced that it can only prolong the faith of the workpeople in the institutions of their masters, and will in the long run hinder their emancipation. As well think of making employers of our fellows, in the hope that they would treat us honestly as wage-earners, as make them M.P.s and expect any Government resulting to use its power in the interest of the oppressed.

But while we believe this, we must welcome the aggressive note struck over this matter, even if we feel the fact of their Parliamentary salaries being endangered had a good deal to do with it. That the law should deny them the power to do even wrong, at their own risk and cost, is altogether against Anarchist principles; and it could, and would, be used for far wider and deeper political purposes than Parliamentary electioneering.

If in the near future the International Miners' Federation should declare a general strike to stop some war begun by two Governments, it would at once become a political question of the highest importance. The Osborne decision declares it illegal to use Trade Union money for political purposes. It would, therefore, be possible, if that decision stood, to obtain an injunction restraining the Miners' Unions from paying strike pay to their members, if the strike was intended to stop a war. The writer in FREEDOM was quite right in saying that experience, and not law, should be the factor to end the waste of Trade Union money in sending working men to the House of Commons. Already there are indications that the rank-and-file are learning the lesson, and realising not only the futility, but the danger, of transforming honest men into crafty and scheming politicians. And with that realisation would come the refusal to waste more money, not to mention time and energy.

The absolute right of the Unions to decide for themselves how they shall spend their money, is the only possible position for Anarchists. In the fight about to take place, therefore, while we totally disagree with Parliamentary action, it will be necessary to fight the law which would dictate to the Unions whether they may or may not use their funds for such a purpose. The Congress was almost unanimous on the question, only one society voting against.

Two resolutions on the agenda dealt with the desire for greater unity on the industrial field. One from the Dockers' Union instructed the Parliamentary Committee to circularise the Unions with a view to ascertaining opinion and suggestions as to the practicability of a National Federation or Confederation of all trades. This, while rather vague, was eloquently moved by Ben Tillett, and carried by 1,055,000 votes to 445,000. The other resolution came from the Amalgamated Union of Cabinet Makers—one of the old skilled trade societies, remember. It was as follows:—

"That, in the opinion of this Congress, the present system of sectional Trade Unionism is unable to successfully combat the encroachments of modern capitalism, and, while recognising the usefulness of sectional Unionism in the past and present, the Congress realises that much greater achievements are possible, and the redemption of the working class would be hastened, if all the existing Unions were amalgamated by industries, with one central executive elected by the combined Unions, and with power to act unitedly whenever there is a strike or lock-out in any industry, thus making the grievance of one the concern of all. The Congress therefore instructs its Parliamentary Committee to put themselves in communication with all the Trade Unions in Great Britain, and ascertain their views on the above question, also to promote a general scheme of amalgamation, and make a recommendation on the matter to the next Congress."

The debate on this was rather poor, drifting into details as to the difficulties of amalgamating the different societies. But the voting was even more significant than on the one coming from the Dockers: 1,175,000 voted in its favour, and only 256,000 against. It was a remarkable indication of the present feeling in favour of a more united and aggressive industrial policy in the Trade Union world. At last, the rank-and-file are emerging from the blind faith in Parliamentary action of the past ten years, and are preparing for an assault upon the citadel of Capitalism by direct action.

Certainly, it would be almost impossible to show a more barren decade for the wage-earner than the one just past. Capital has never exploited the workers so successfully as during the last ten years. While they have had their eyes fixed

on Parliament, the lords of industry have piled up huge fortunes out of their unpaid labour. Their hours of work have remained almost as they were at the beginning of the century, and their wages have but slightly increased. The cost of living has gone up enormously, and their relative position gone back. Compare this result with the great gains obtained by direct action during the militant years of the "new" Trade Union movement, 1889 to 1893.

It is this feeling, growing among the rank-and-file of the Unions, that accounts for the increasing desire for industrial unity and direct action. This year's Trades Union Congress gives proof of the correctness of the Anarchist teaching in the industrial warfare of to-day. Experience is driving the workers into our position, and, though slow to accept it, they are coming our way sure enough. A few years may see some very remarkable developments.

JOHN TURNER.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

The French Railway Strike.

The capitalist system is like a rotten ship, which, when one hole is patched up, will leak in another place. The unemployment crisis is hardly tided over for a time, when a much graver evil, the rise in the price of food, approaches with deadly precision, beginning in the poorer Continental countries, but extending already to Paris, the heart of one of the richest countries. Unemployment leaves many undisturbed, but dear food is a propagandist of discontent who penetrates automatically into the personal and private life of each family, however much they may stand apart from all social movements. This time the social problem undisguised stares everybody in the face, and the necessity of collective action of some unprecedented kind becomes by-and-by patent to large masses, who feel that the limits of patience and suffering are nearly reached. Hence strikes become fiercer contests than they have been for a long time, and get out of the control of the old peaceful leaders, sedate bureaucrats with middle-class incomes; nor are the State-made meshes of arbitration and conciliation boards and the like able to contain them, and the employers' last weapon, the lock-out, is boldly faced by hundreds of thousands. The people proceed to attack by means of the boycott of particularly obnoxious trades (the meat boycott, etc.), and this gives a great stimulus to the co-operative organisation of the food supply. Where bakers raised their prices during the Paris floods, their shops were simply demolished; and direct action of this kind is inevitable in the poorer districts of France when, with the progress of the winter, still dearer food and greater need of coals, with wages remaining stationary, will have brought the people's misery to a climax. Famine preceded the great French Revolution.

This situation, which everybody understands, prompted, I believe, Aristide Briand, author of "The General Strike and Revolution," that famous speech in favour of the General Strike made before the French Socialist Congress (December, 1899), and Prime Minister of France, to strike beforehand a blow at Labour, to weaken the organisation, cohesion, and mutual confidence of Syndicalists by a general attack with all the reactionary forces combined—the Government, the Army, the Law, the Press, the scare of a plot, starvation by dismissal, etc.; it is hard to say which tools of capitalist defence were *not* mobilised these last weeks against Labour, except the priests, perhaps, because these scarecrows no longer frighten the people of France!

I am, of course, speaking of the French railway strike, which began by the demand of the least skilled sections of railway workers for a minimum daily wage of 5 francs (Sundays included), a demand made urgent by the ever-increasing cost of living. When this demand was supported by a general strike of solidarity on the Northern and Western systems, the Government stepped in at once with such a display of military and police measures that the situation became embittered from the first, and an ordinary strike was out of the question. Arbitrary arrests on one side, cutting of wires and other acts of *sabotage* on the other, panic news of a revolutionary or a monarchist plot, mobilisation and placing under martial law of all railway workers who had been soldiers, the concentration of troops in Paris and the military occupation of all parts of Paris (ostensibly as a protection against the building trades' strike)—all this, coupled with the unanimous vigour of magistrates (said to be independent) in dealing out, by the hundred, weeks and months of imprisonment to all who made the slightest deprecatory remark to blacklegs, etc.—well, all this created the impression that either a real massacre was to be provoked, to crush the energetic elements among the workers once and for all, and to inaugurate a period of absolute reaction on the Russian model, or that a military dictatorship, leading to a regular *coup d'état*, was preparing for some dark purpose. In these circumstances the bulk of the railway workers abandoned their fighting attitude and resumed work; the strike collapsed, and Briand parades as the saviour of bourgeois society.

Aristide Briand remains a dark horse. If he wished to make a wide gulf between the Republic entrusted to his care and the workers, so that the people should execrate the Republic and stand by indifferent when a monarchical restoration was attempted, he could not have acted

otherwise; he did his best to make the Republic odious and contemptible. If this old advocate of the General Strike wished to give an object-lesson to his former comrades that Socialist Ministers are the worst of all (a useful demonstration for those who believe in the conquest of political power by Socialists, instead of the destruction of all political power, as advocated by Anarchists), he could not have given a more lucid demonstration: his experience as a Socialist helped him to strike the most treacherous blows. Anyhow, he overdid it, and is now the object of general hatred, with no other friend than Monsieur Lépine. It matters little whether his Cabinet will fall over this question or another; the main point is that the French workers passed through this experience of a novel kind with no great loss after all; and the methods used against them this time, nearly the last resources that the capitalist system had, will thereby be infinitely less effective in the struggles of days to come. Forewarned, forearmed!

Argentina.

Rafael Barrett, in his pamphlet, "The Argentine Terror," just published in Asuncion, Paraguay, gives a brief but masterly description of the struggle between two antagonistic classes, and the ferocity which is shown by the dominant section of the nation against those who fight for the triumph of justice and liberty.

In past times the Government granted gratuitously or for a small amount certain portions of land to immigrants, but this system, unduly extended, brought many abuses, so that nowadays the law denies the smallest concession, and a poor family arriving there must consequently starve. This state of things refers to the country districts, but let us see what is happening in the chief town, Buenos Aires.

The average wage for a workman is 4s. per day, but it costs twice as much to live as in London. For women, work is horrible; dress-makers and tailoresses, who earn a mere trifle, work for fourteen or sixteen hours at their task. On the other hand, capitalism grows rapidly and enormously; land has increased fifty times in value in twenty years, and as increase of wealth did not bring increase of intelligence, or help progress or morality, the result has been the growth of a stupid and tyrannical class, which, in order to maintain things as they are, must be protected by the help of the police and the Army, intimately allied to the Church and clergy for stupefying the people more and more. In 1810 the independence of this nation was won from the domination of the Spaniards, only to fall into slavery under the modern barbarous money-bags of "high life."

Ethnically, the population is of Spanish and Italian blood, and the oppressed are struggling with that revolutionary spirit so characteristic of the race, a spirit so different to that displayed by Socialists of the Saxon countries. In proof of this, we have the fighting witnessed a short time ago in the bloodstained streets of the second Latin town of the world. The modern privileged caste of capitalism, seeing the unrest around them, and feeling the insecurity of their privileges, had recourse to all means in order to avoid disturbances, and passed the infamous Law of Residence, by which hundreds of oppressed revolutionists have been sent back to their native country. They also appointed a cruel chief of police, named Colonel Falcon, who, striving to emulate his comrade Plehve of St. Petersburg, was finally blown to pieces by a bomb.

Last May, during the celebration of the centenary of independence, the workmen, as a protest against the Law of Residence, declared a general strike, which was followed by a sanguinary repression; and during this trouble a policeman, acting on official orders, threw an inoffensive bomb in the Colon Theatre, in order to furnish a pretext for unbridled repression and horrible tortures. Finally, the Legislative Chambers abolished all Constitutional rights for those who would not submit to their infamy in proclaiming a monstrous law that could only have been enacted by men mad with feelings of revenge. As the reader may imagine, the only people who could approve such a law are the exploiting and dishonest capitalists and degraded slaves.

P. V.

Brazil.

The Modern School movement in Brazil is steadily progressing. The Sao Paulo Association has already gathered 10 contos de reis, or about £700. In order to build the school, as far as possible, to resemble in all respects that founded by Francisco Ferrer in Barcelona, and also to have its own publishing house, another £3,500 will be necessary, which they hope to arrange. The Rio de Janeiro Association (whose object, as I have already said in a previous issue of FREEDOM, is to assist the building of the Modern School in Sao Paulo, and after that to build one in Rio de Janeiro), is also going ahead. It has contrived to gain the sympathy of the intellectual members of society in Rio de Janeiro, and has consequently organised a series of fortnightly lectures in propaganda of the Modern School, which, on account of the lecturers, are always well attended. Five have already been delivered: one by a doctor, another by a member of the Academy of Letters of Rio de Janeiro, another by a lawyer, etc., etc. I enclose a copy of the first lecture, given by Dr. Mauricio de Medeiros. The next lecture will be given by the director of the Municipal Library. The Rio de Janeiro Association has also a great number of members who contribute monthly.

M. FELDMAN.

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TOM MANN AND THE INDUSTRIAL UNION MOVEMENT.

The efforts of Tom Mann to awaken the British Trade Unionists to a sense of the realities of their position, followed as it will be by an increasing public interest in Industrial Unionism, will be watched by Anarchists with considerable interest, an interest which will be in no sense abated because of our recognition of the tremendous obstacles to be surmounted. The inertia and apathy which characterise the rank-and-file of our Trade Unions can only be dispelled by a long and persistent propaganda having as its object the development of the revolutionary spirit among the workers.

The ideas being propagated by Tom Mann are, in my opinion, not merely useless, but almost certain to aggravate and intensify the condition of things already existing. His proposals may be briefly summarised as being to make use of the present organisations, but to make them more effective fighting machines by federating the different sections, so that they may act solidarily. He does not propose in any way to destroy the present Unions, but to extend and develop their sphere of action, aiming at the destruction of the sectional spirit, although not destroying the sectional Union; and by means of effective federation to establish Industrial Unions. He decides for a policy of non-Parliamentarianism as against anti-Parliamentarianism.

In examining his proposals, let us take the last one first. The refusal to take a definitely anti-Parliamentary attitude can only be described as a piece of pure expediency, a truckling to the Parliamentary tradition so strong among British workers. The sitting-on-the-fence attitude of the non-Parliamentarian is so illogical as to be quite absurd. The spirit of compromise thus early made manifest augurs ill for the ultimate success of the movement.

In deciding for the retention of the present organisations, Mann has quite evidently failed to get to grips with the root of the problem which he is facing. The curse of Trade Unionism in this country is the centralisation of executive power, with its resultant multiplication of officials. The corresponding stagnation and death of local life and spirit is the inevitable consequence. This centralisation would be enormously extended and developed by Mann's scheme.

It is quite probable that the present reaction against Parliamentary tactics consequent on the absolute failure of the Labour Party in the House of Commons, and the no less complete futility of the sectional strike, will operate very powerfully in Mann's favour. It seems almost certain that we are on the eve of a great development of our Unions on the lines of the semi-military organisation, which has proved such a complete failure, both in this country and in Germany. A huge, cumbersome, slowly acting machine of the familiar type, in which the slightest tendency towards originality and initiative will be almost certainly ruthlessly stamped out, so that "unity and discipline" may be maintained.

It is our duty as revolutionists to make active the revolutionary spirit lying latent in the Unions. The spirit which is responsible for the heroic struggle of the shipyard boilermakers, the same spirit of solidarity which gave birth to the spontaneous strike of the workers of all grades on the North-Eastern Railway, both struggles entered into not because of the respective organisations, but in spite of them, in direct opposition to the wishes of their own officials. To feed this revolutionary spirit it is necessary to break down the present movement towards centralisation. Federations and amalgamations will not give birth to the spirit of industrial solidarity, yet without this spirit, as recent events have shown us, the most gigantic Union is powerless. Given the proper spirit, the great present-day fetish of organisation is useless. It is not merely a positive hindrance, but the ultimate destroyer of the ideals which called it into being. No! the Revolution will not come by means of "National Amalgamated Federations," wherein the spirit of revolt will be suffocated by the too fond embraces of a clinging officialism.

We must decentralise, and as far as possible destroy executive power. Let the workers themselves bear the burden and responsibility of decisive action, let them no longer put their trust in sagacious officials, who by their petty jealousies and ambitions stifle and stultify them at every turn. Let the workers but once realise the power and the strength which lie in their own concerted and direct action, and the Revolution will have begun. It will come as the result of a new feeling of self-reliance and the mutual confidence of each worker in all workers—the spontaneous expression of the spirit of solidarity.

JOHN PATON.

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WOMAN THE CREATOR OF CIVILISATION.

To the great question which in ethnology appears at every turn on the way, "Did the individual precede society, or society precede the individual?" the answer seemed until lately most easy, and the official lesson was glibly repeated: the first individual reproduced himself in male and female, and of this first couple, created superb and vigorous, intelligent and beautiful, was born the first family, which expanded into a tribe, then into peoples and nations. The doctrine was deceptive through its apparent simplicity, and seemed inspired by common sense. But, thanks to geology and palæontology, it was found necessary to relegate the theory of man as springing up out of the middle of the world—after the manner of a Robinson Crusoe landing on his desert isle—to its place among fairy tales. Apart from his fellows, man is man as much as an ant is an ant independent of its ant-hill, as much as a bee is a bee when it has no longer a hive. What isolated man becomes we see in the cellular prisons invented by the philanthropist. Till the contrary be proved, we will suppose that our ancestors began with a collective life, that they depended on their surroundings as much if not more than we. In opposition to the idea that the individual is father of the society, we suppose that society has been the mother of the individual. The communal dwelling appears to us to have been the support of the collective life, and the great medium of the earliest civilisations. Communal was the habitation, and communal the wives with their children; the men pursued the same prey, and devoured it together after the manner of wolves; all felt, thought, and acted in concert. Everything leads us to believe that at the outset collectivism was at its maximum and individualism at its minimum.

Before leaving the subject we must mention an important observation which is connected with it. Amongst our Hyperboreans, as among a great number of primitive people, such as the Tartars, and, for the most part, the negroes, the construction of the dwellings is, as a matter of course, the business of the women, who take the entire charge of it from the foundation to the top, the husbands only assisting by bringing the materials to the scene of action. The fact has been often quoted as proving the notorious idleness of these uncivilised males, who throw the heaviest labours upon their weaker companions. I prefer to see in this an argument in favour of the hypothesis that woman was the first architect. It is to woman, I think, that mankind owes all that has made us men. Burdened with the children and the baggage, she erected a permanent cover to shelter the little family; the nest for her brood was perhaps a ditch carpeted with moss; by the side of it she set up a pole, with large leaves laid across; and when she thought of fastening three or four of these poles together by their tops, the hut was invented, the hut, the first "interior." She laid there the firebrand, with which she never parts, and the hut became illuminated, the hut was warmed, the hut sheltered a hearth. Has not Prometheus been called the "Father of Men" to make us understand that humanity began with the use of fire? Now, whatever may have been the origin of fire, it is certain that woman has always been the guardian and preserver of this source of life. A day comes when by the side of a doe which the man has slain the woman sees a fawn. It looks at her with pleading eyes. She has compassion on it, and carries it away in her arms. How many times has not a savage woman been seen to do so! The little creature becomes attached to her, and follows her everywhere. Thus it was that woman reared and tamed animals, and became the mother of pastoral peoples. And that is not all. Whilst the husband devoted himself to the greater game, the woman, engaged with her little ones, collected eggs, insects, seeds, and roots. Of these seeds she made a store in her hut; a few that she let fall germinated close by, ripened, and bore fruit. On seeing this, she sowed others, and became the mother of agricultural peoples. In fact, among all uncivilised men cultivation may be traced to the housewife. Notwithstanding the doctrine which holds sway at present, I maintain that woman was the creator of the primordial elements of civilisation. No doubt woman at the outset was but a human female, but this female nourished, reared, and protected those more feeble than herself, whilst her mate, a terrible savage, knew only how to pursue and kill. Necessity forced him to slay, and the deed was not distasteful. He was, by instinct, a ferocious beast; she, by function, a mother.—ELIE RECLUS.

Publications Received.

- Francisco Ferrer: His Life, Work, and Martyrdom.* 25 cents. New York: Francisco Ferrer Association, 241 Fifth Avenue.
- The Modern School.* By Francisco Ferrer. 5 cents. Same publishers.
- The Rational Education of Children.* 5 cents. Same publishers.
- El Terror Argentino.* By Rafael Barrett. Montevideo: Circulo Internacional de Estudios Sociales, Rio Negro 274.
- Libres Critiques sur la Science et la Nature.* 10c. Paris: La Vie Naturelle, 7 Rue Jean-Robert.
- Les Ouvriers, les Syndicats, et les Anarchistes.* Par E. Armand. 10c. Verviers (Belgium): 91 Rue des Franchimontois.
- Edward Carpenter, ein Sanger der Freiheit und des Volkes.* Von Pierre Ramus. 20c. Brussels: W. Schouteten, 88 Rue de Ruysbroeck.

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PROPAGANDA NOTES.

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

PLYMOUTH.

I am writing you on behalf of the newly formed Plymouth Socialist League. We have lately secured a room at 49 Well Street, Plymouth, so that if any Anarchist comrades should be in the Three Towns at any time, they will know where to find us. We have had an uphill struggle since we left the S.D.P., or, rather, were expelled for preaching Direct Action. At first we constituted ourselves an S.L.P. branch, but a controversy having arisen on the so-called "political clause" in the preamble of this party, a split occurred, five members remaining S.L.P., the other fifteen forming themselves into a branch of the Industrialist League. Hardly had we taken this step than we became acquainted with the Anarchist position, mainly through the efforts of Comrade J. Walters. We have now taken up a definite stand on the Anarchist Communist position, but, on account of the prejudice attaching to the name, we have adopted the title of Plymouth Socialist League. We hold two outdoor propaganda meetings each week—Thursday evenings in the Market Square, Sunday evenings at Manor Street (the scene of the great free speech fight of 1906).

We have had several visits from Comrade Walters. About a month ago he addressed a large and attentive meeting at Manor Street, creating a profound impression, especially among certain S.D.P. members who were present. We are fighting a most energetic battle for the Revolution in the Three Towns, and considering that we have only three or four speakers, the amount of work we have got through is prodigious. The local S.D.P. for the last two years has been steadily going down the incline, and is now dead and damned as regards revolutionary spirit. It is a mere caricature of the organisation that thrashed the forces of "law and order" at Manor Street in 1906.

We require the services of a good Anarchist speaker in order to extract what is worth having from the ruins of the Plymouth S.D.P. I am convinced that if our position were put before them clearly, we should have at least a dozen of their members joining with us, fighting for Socialism and Freedom, instead of Statecraft and Fakirdom.

R. E. BELL.

GLASGOW.

What is the matter with Glasgow Anarchists? Since May Day a little band, a *very* little band of us have been holding meetings with more or less regularity, averaging at least more than one a week. We have occasionally received words of encouragement from some local comrades; nay, more, we have even received *promises* to fix up meetings in outlying districts; but herein ends the "assistance" offered us. The regular sales of FREEDOM in Glasgow indicate that there are many sympathisers here. But to live a life of sympathy is not to live, it is only to wistfully watch other people live. The meaning of life is in the Anarchist movement. Let us live.

On Sunday, November 13, at 2 p.m., at the Clarion Rooms, 26 Elmbank Crescent, a meeting will be held to discuss the possibilities of, and arrange for, Anarchist propaganda in Glasgow and district. It is most earnestly hoped, by the few comrades now working together, that comrades will upon this occasion turn up in large numbers and with the sincere intention of setting the flag flying on a more secure staff than that which has supported it during the summer. By way of anticipating objections, let us explain that we who are responsible for calling this meeting are already aware that the threshold of winter is not a suitable time for starting propaganda, but we are also aware that it is manifestly impossible to do anything in the spring or summer or autumn—at present, and therefore we choose the only time open for action—now.

If the little work done during the summer is to have any effect, it must be carried through to the spring; and therefore the very difficulties of the season make it necessary that we should get our forces in fighting order. Besides, having only been here one summer, I confess to being a little sceptical whether a Scotch winter can be worse than a Scotch summer.

Now an apology. By a most unfortunate misunderstanding, a meeting was advertised to be held in the Secular Hall for the same purpose as the one now to take place in the Clarion Rooms. The proposed meeting was arranged for, but afterwards cancelled. Owing, however, to our lack of organisation, our advertising department (!) was not in direct communication with our general secretary (!) and hence the mistake. If any comrades saw and responded to this advertisement, we hope they will forgive our blunder and turn up again this time.

It is only right to explain that the remarks above concerning unfulfilled promises to arrange meetings in outlying districts certainly do not apply to our comrade at Darvel, who has twice arranged meetings at which I was to speak, and whom I have twice disappointed at the last moment. I am sincerely sorry for this.

G. B.

LIVERPOOL.

The Revolutionary Industrialists of Liverpool continue their outdoor meetings successfully. Great credit is due to Muston for his devotion to this phase of the movement. The Brighton manifesto which has been adopted emphatically declares war against militarism, patriotism, and Parliamentarianism. A goodly number of the S.D.P. members have taken up the Industrial ticket, and have subscribed their names to the above society with its "straight-backed" policy. The Conference on Industrial Syndicalism is looked forward to by the Liverpool comrades, who hope that the attitude *re* Parliamentary action will be a decided "No." Peter Larkin and myself hope to be in Manchester on November 26, when, I understand, the Northern Conference will take place.

Rooms have been taken at 2 Birchfield Street, Islington. Meetings every Wednesday at 8 p.m.

Our Spanish discussion class at the International Club on Fridays has not been very successful so far, but as the winter season creeps on, the attendance will creep up. Lessons are given by the members on Tuesdays. Every Anarchist ought to study another language. We must be truly Internationalists.

The Anarchist Sunday School, which claims me for its devotee, has once more been lifted on to firmer ground. Thanks are due to the comrades of the movement for their generous donations. We are clear of debt, and

up to date have £1 13s. 8d. in hand. I heave a sigh of relief and am truly thankful.

The Ferrer demonstration was a huge success as far as numbers go. The room was crowded, and the children sang the "International" with great enthusiasm. A short address was given by myself, and the children gave their earnest attention to the details of that atrocious murder. We sent our fraternal greetings to the comrades of Barcelona, wishing them successful meetings and demonstrations. One of our scholars, Willie Bowyer, recited the poem "Francisco Ferrer," by Langdon Everard. A fine poem, and well rendered by our young comrade.

Mat Roche is interesting the youngsters about the adventures of Tom Sawyer, by Mark Twain. These lectures are looked forward to with interest, and Mat never forgets to preach Anarchism at every opportunity in the course of his humorous lectures. We shall be glad to see comrades on Sundays at 1 Clarendon Terrace, Beaumont Street, at 3.15 p.m.

Subscriptions (September 25 to October 25)—School 8s 4½d, Arthur 1s, G. Davison £4 5s, B. Black 2s, F. Goulding 6d, Whiteway 10d.

International Club, Spekelaand Buildings,
Canning Place.

DICK JAMES.

BELFAST.

A group has been formed here for the study of Anarchist Communism and Direct Action. Meetings are held on Sunday mornings at 11 o'clock in the Freethought Club, Room 20, 109 Donegall Street. Comrades visiting Belfast are invited to give us a call.

NEWCASTLE.

With the idea of putting the Anarchist position to the locked-out boiler-makers, Comrade W. Ponder paid us a visit on October 1—5, when a series of open-air meetings were held in Newcastle, Wallsend, Gateshead, and Byker; with one exception, all were fairly successful. Some thousands of leaflets ("Do Not Vote" and "What is Anarchism?") were distributed amongst the audiences, but there was only a very moderate sale of FREEDOM and pamphlets. Owing to the short notice of Ponder's visit, the arrangements for meetings, etc., were not as complete as we could have wished.

Newcastle comrades, please note that FREEDOM can be obtained on the Sandhill every Sunday morning between 11 and 12.30.

STROUD, GLOS.

Perhaps it will interest readers of FREEDOM to know that during October an Anarchist has spoken twice under the auspices of the Stroud branch of the I.L.P. The first meeting was on October 9, when this revolutionary comrade delivered a stirring address on "Antimilitarism." The meeting was held in connection with the campaign which the I.L.P. is at present carrying on against armaments; but, needless to say, the speaker did not deal with the subject quite from the I.L.P.'s viewpoint. The second time our comrade spoke was at the Ferrer demonstration organised by the branch, when he was the principal speaker. He told the audience quite plainly that Ferrer was an Anarchist and a Freethinker, and explained what he meant by both those terms. The audience followed his arguments for Direct Action very closely, and a good deal of feeling was aroused by his dramatic description of the sufferings and death of the great Spaniard. A strong resolution was passed demanding that Ferrer's property should be handed over to the executors he appointed, for the purpose of carrying on the Modern Schools and the publishing business. There was an intelligent discussion after both meetings, in which the speaker managed to get in a good many points for Direct Action.

JOHN EDELMAN.

WALTHAMSTOW.

We have been holding meetings at West Green Corner, Tottenham, on Sundays, morning and evening, the latter having the best attendance. Comrades Ponder, Baron, Crittall, and Greenbourn have been our speakers. At the evening meetings we have had good questions and discussion, also good sale of literature. Some who have attended our meetings regularly are now beginning to understand that Anarchy will be quite a different state of society from that depicted by the defenders of centralised authority.

The following instance of the vagaries of majority rule has its humours. We are in the midst of a by-election, and have meetings galore indoor and out. The two local branches of the S.D.P. met conjointly on the 20th at the William Morris Hall, to hear reasons from three members of the executive of their party why those who have a vote should give it to the Conservative candidate. We hear that the voting was 33 in favour of supporting the Conservative, 29 against. But it appears the minority was much stronger than the mere counting of noses, and the delegates would not accept such a small majority to try to enforce the principle of majority rule. I doubt if they would have been so conscientious if such a majority had elected them to an official position. Another meeting was to be held on the question. Meanwhile, no doubt, both political parties are trembling in their shoes over the question of which way the S.D.P.'ers will vote.

FANNER.

SOUTHWARK.

We have continued to hold meetings at Union Road, Newington Causeway, and St. George's Circus whenever the weather has made it possible. Comrade Ray, as usual, has been our mainstay; but we have received support from an ex-member of the S.P.G.B., who has recently "come over," and who speaks well. We have had some rather lively times lately, and some questions and opposition which say much for the quality of the beer sold in our neighbourhood. (This is not intended for an advertisement.) At the end of last month we received a polite request from the S.D.P. to give way to the Clarion Van, they stating that their arrangements had been made long previously. We did so, and contented ourselves with asking a few questions and watching the case on behalf of the Southwark group. We had no meeting on the 13th, but attended the Ferrer commemoration at Charlotte Street, which was very successful, thanks to the efforts of our energetic North London comrades.

T. P.

NORTH LONDON ANARCHIST COMMUNIST GROUP.

Meetings are held regularly as follows:—

Saturday, 8 p.m., Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road.

Sunday, 11.30 and 3.30, Regent's Park.

„ 7.30, Bolsover Street, Portland Road.

FERRER COMMEMORATIONS.

In London crowded and enthusiastic meetings have been held to commemorate the assassination of Francisco Ferrer. At the Communist Club in Charlotte Street numbers could not gain admission, and an overflow meeting was held outside. Kitz, Rocker, Withington, Leggatt, Malatesta, Boulter, Tcherkesoff, Aldred and others spoke in the hall. At South Place Institute, where McCabe was the principal speaker, an even greater crowd assembled, and the hall might have been filled twice over. Again, at the "Workers' Friend" Club a fine meeting was carried through, where many of our friends who had spoken at the Communist Club again aroused the enthusiasm of the audience. An era of anti-clericalism seems to have begun.

WALTHAMSTOW AND EDMONTON ANARCHIST GROUP.

Meetings are held every Sunday at Angel Road, Edmonton, at 12 o'clock; and at West Green Corner, Tottenham, every Sunday evening at 7 o'clock.

GLASGOW ANARCHIST GROUP.

Meetings are held at Glasgow Green every Sunday at eight p.m.

MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(October 7—November 2.)

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