

Freedom

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NOTES.

The "Strike Epidemic."

To call the present unrest a "strike epidemic" is only a superficial way of describing a growing and deep-seated discontent with the glaringly abnormal conditions of a society which condemns the producer to live (?) on an insufficient wage while the masters revel in stupid luxury. The painters and decorators and others employed in the building trade are only feeling what so many others feel—the increased cost of living and uncertainty of employment. They, too, are putting the eternal question: "Why should this be?" Every one who is not blinded by capitalist prejudices will echo the question. Especially as it so happens that the Board of Trade Report just issued indicates a notable increase in building trade prosperity. Why, then, this trouble? Because the selfishness of the employing class cares nothing for the welfare of the worker. Had it been otherwise there would not be the sacrifice of life and limb amongst the wealth-producers that makes of our industrial system one vast battlefield. There would not be that continuous crippling of the lives of the rising generation by bad social conditions, which increase diseases far more rapidly than remedial measures can eradicate them. A strike, then, is a protest more or less conscious against these iniquities. They are natural, inevitable, and, when the workers realise the root causes of the evils they combat, will lead on to that devoutly-to-be-wished-for consummation—the abolition of the capitalist system.

An Orgie of Wickedness.

If the folly of the rich may be taken as an indication of the decay and dissolution of a rotten society, the unspeakable orgie of millionaire madness just reported from New York would be a hopeful sign for the American wage-slave. The "freak entertainments" of Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish, as reported by the *Daily Telegraph*, indicate a form of insanity which the Eugenists might profitably study. The guests, we are told, "were garbed as yokels and milkmaids, and rode in hay waggons"—a very good idea if they had intended to do an honest day's work. But this was farthest from their minds. Instead, we read that "with the ices the chef took in a huge cake with sixteen lighted candles. It was cut, and from it sprang a tiger." Another item of a "social programme" included a barefoot dance at Beacon Hill, the Newport estate of Commodore Curtis James. Reclining on a huge sea-shell borne by six Tritons, Mrs. Noyes, a skilful exponent of rhythmic dancing, was carried into the ball-room. She interpreted the Sea Goddess in a pageant. Neptune, following on a white horse, greeted her, and invited her to dance. Throwing off her robes, Mrs. Noyes entered a tank glistening with the colours of the rainbow. As they fell in, multi-coloured lights blazed out, and the couple danced in water, which just covered their ankles. After this, one may readily believe that the Revolution is near at hand in the United States, and that these human asses, drunk with gold, are dancing on a volcano.

Co-operation and Classes.

Co-operation as practised to-day has many advantages, some of which are that it proves how necessary it is to have a complete revolution if we wish really to free ourselves from our economic bondage. The voluntary basis of Co-operation, and the remarkable distributive organisation it has established, are most important object-lessons, especially for those who can imagine nothing succeeding that is not State-organised. But the cloven hoof of the capitalist spirit of exploitation has shown itself so

conspicuously in the matter of long hours, low wages, and the desire for the 5 per cent. interest, that when Earl Grey, in his address, said it was "only a question of time before the sunbeams of Co-operation would illuminate the dark valleys," etc., etc., and that they were all "carrying in their hearts the same motto, 'Each for all and all for each'"—well, one feels the time will be pretty long before either the "sunbeams" or the "motto" will bring bread and freedom to the many millions who in this country alone are living (existing!) on the poverty-line. Still, it is good to know there are 20,000,000 Co-operators represented at the ninth International Co-operative Congress, and one can only hope that amongst this vast number there may be some rebellious spirits who will, when the moment demands it, fight the capitalist system *outside* their societies more effectively than they are now doing within them.

"Parting of the Ways."

While it is interesting, and indeed hopeful, to watch the growth of Co-operation on the one hand, and of Trade Union solidarity on the other, it is equally instructive to note the complete failure of political action as exemplified in the present condition of the Labour Party. The course of events during the last few years has given us a remarkable proof of all that, as Anarchists have argued, must inevitably follow as a result of the action taken by the Parliamentary Socialists of all shades of opinion. They have achieved less than nothing in lifting the burden of capitalism from the workers' shoulders. On the other hand, direct action gains ground in all directions; and however much we may feel that a far deeper understanding of the root problems is still needed by the great masses, it can at least be said with truth that the revolt against so-called "discipline" and the bogey of mere leadership, has had a great development, and foretells a splendid promise for the future. Let us continue to educate our fellows against the tyranny of officialism in their own organisations, and still more against the worse tyranny of the State.

The Peace Conference.

The report of the Hague Peace Conference makes interesting reading, for we are told that "the non-ratification of the Treaty [the Declaration of London, February, 1909] is an accident in British history.....and not in any way typical of British practice." This is inspiring news, and we are anxious to know at what date in the existence of the State this sense of honour was developed. It is certainly borne in upon us in recalling history that British statesmen have not been over-burdened with this virtue.

Later we read that "one or two Governments would snatch at a plausible excuse to destroy the principle of regular international conferences which is visibly leading to the growth of 'a Parliament of Man—a Federation of the World.'.....To set such an idea afloat at a moment when the diplomatic corps are preparing for the ceremonial opening of the Peace Palace, built as a home for the Conferences of the future and their permanent officers, is peculiarly untimely." We ask what relation can a bourgeois monument to Peace, capable, we are told, of housing permanent officials, have to the actual attainment of international peace; but we are glad that some Governments are really honest enough to desire withdrawal from representation on such a hypocritical body as this Congress must perforce remain. Hypocritical through sheer inability to promote peace so long as exploitation is practised by the capitalists it represents. We are indeed glad to learn that some Governments would throw off the mask, and await patiently the news that those who remain faithful to the Peace Congress have taken the first step towards peace by starting a campaign against human exploitation in every form; but this would mean depriving the delegates of the kudos attaching to their position, and we have not yet discovered that moral courage is their strong point.

THE CITIZEN AND THE PRODUCER.

The Objects of the Social Revolution.

The Athenian "citizen" was a philosopher—more or less of a charlatan—who lived in luxury and idleness upon the work of four hundred thousand slaves. The "citizen" of Sparta was a rustic and a warrior, who cruelly oppressed and exploited the unfortunate helots. The "citizen" of Rome was a dissolute bandit, or worse, who carried war into all the then known world, and robbed the natives of their produce, reducing all to vile slavery.

This word "citizen" is the designation of the "unit" which serves as the basis of Republicanism.

It cannot be said that the modern citizen has risen to any greater height of social elevation, because to-day there still exists as hateful an inequality.

To the ancient the title "citizen" was a privilege, a dignity, and a guarantee of that of which to-day many are deprived—the ordinary or common garden variety of citizen being considered as occupying an inferior position; and the term "citizen," being used to denote the equality of all men, serves as the political basis of universal suffrage, which hypocritically hides these social inequalities.

In the political constitution of present-day society, the noble and the earl, the clergyman and the soldier, the landlord and the proprietor, the merchant and the manufacturer, the farmer, the mechanic, the labourer—one and all are citizens, and all equally eligible to take part in the Government.

The noble may be vain, haughty, proud of his ancestry; the cleric, forming a distinct caste, may have an intellect atrophied by theological study; the soldier may be an ignorant blustering fellow; the merchant and manufacturer may accumulate money by usury and exploitation; the "professional" man may make for himself a brilliant position and career, especially if he be a lawyer, thanks to a special privilege enabling him to attend the Universities; but the farmer, the mechanic, the labourer, compelled to work from early youth and lacking means of education, must always work; and their only share in the highly vaunted Constitutional and democratic benefits and advantages consists in voting for their masters—choosing between oppressors differing in self-imposed labels and professed principles, but one and all equally insistent upon their "pound of flesh."

These—the "lower classes," as they are contemptuously called by those whom they support—cannot do otherwise at present than become mere "ballot-throwers," kept in ignorance, as they are, of the laws on which the Constitution and administration are based, and bewildered by the jugglery and "confidence-trickery" by which the political partisans ensnare them and keep their attention and interest anywhere but on their own direct welfare.

Thus the rich and privileged monopolise government and rule the democracy. Is this either rational or scientific?

The title of "citizen" is to-day as contrary to equality as it was in the days of its origin.

Democracy, based upon the political unit of the citizen, whether in a unitarian system according to the tendencies of French Jacobinism, or a federation, combining the entities of that unit—i.e., the municipality, the province, the State—disregards and neglects the producers (all who perform those duties necessary for subsistence) and the associations formed by them, acknowledging at most their rights, just as it recognises the rights of philosophical, industrial, and recreative groups—and is a mere fiction. Those who preach and desire to bring about democracy are either deceived or deceivers, because those who hold a monopoly of riches and science will never permit their servants—the tailor, the shoemaker, the baker, or any of those who provide for their idleness—to govern them.

Democracy is a vain hope, and as a reality only signifies the sanction of tyrannical exploitation and plunder of the workers, who are its victims. Democracy is a falsehood, a hateful word invented to dominate and rule the worker by its deception. A system of force cannot be maintained in a rational epoch.

We are not democrats, and abhor power and government. We separate ourselves from those deceived workers who dream of the formation of a "Workers' Political Party" or a "Socialist Party."

We are opposed to all social injustice, which had its origin in the first brutal act committed by the strong against the weak, and which was sanctioned in its political form when the powerful and astute first combined to form a Government, and which politics preserves, persisting in the error that authority as a principle is right, in a greater or lesser degree, and will give to us the perfect social formula. We are opposed to all the sophisms that our enemies invent, and we present ourselves to the workers exposing their so-called aspirations and demands for justice, together with their putting forward their ideas and doctrines as representing the living thought and active force of the nation; and finally, we ask that all who profess to prefer justice to self-interest, truth to prejudice, and the inflexible logic of science to the vain phraseology of political cheap-jacks of all colours, to band themselves together and actively propagate and realise these ideals.

We proclaim ANARCHY, and aspire to a social-economic régime in which through and by the harmony of interests, and a reciprocity of rights and obligations, all will be free; in which all who are able will take part in production, and so attain the greatest possible happiness, which can only be attained when all that is consumed is gained without

exploitation and without the tears, curses, and misery of any exploited one.

Nature with her abundant and spontaneous gifts, Science with the results of observation and methodical study, the application of science to production and the resultant wealth—form a universal patrimony which belongs of natural right to all.

Those laws which conserve for the use of a few that which none has created, or which all men have created by their study and work, are unjust, infamous, and exploiting, and can only be approved of by those who hold the land, riches, and science. Those who formulate and pass these laws, those who preserve them, those who submit to and applaud them, are guilty of "lese humanity." By them progress is held back; by them the intelligence of men is wasted; by them the beliefs and superstitions of the Middle Ages still live in pomp and luxury; by them the bodies and minds of men are physically and morally perverted and destroyed.

The land has no owner, neither has the air, light, sea, subsoil, woods, forests, and all else that exists without the aid and work of man.

Science has no landlord—the noble and faithful personification of human solidarity, sum total of the partial achievements of each and every generation of every civilised race and people.

The means of production, the application and results of scientific knowledge, likewise have no owner.

Because the land, science, and the great mechanical appliances and arts have not been created by their present monopolisers, but either by causes independent of man's activity or by the product of all men's work, he who appropriates the title of proprietor or of a university degree and with it exploits his fellow man, keeping him in dependency, merits the title of thief.

The true and only social unit is the producer.

All who cultivate the Sciences are producers, widening our intellectual sphere with the secrets wrested from Nature, and increasing our productive potentiality; all those who follow Art, elevating our thoughts and making us more capable of seeing and feeling the beautiful, and increasing our joys; all those who cultivate industry and agriculture, attending to all our bodily needs and necessities; the learned man in his study solving intricate problems, arriving at a solution which is transformed into a marvellous invention; the explorer who, defying Arctic inclemencies and torrid heats, pierces into the heart of Africa or braves the rigours of the Polar regions to determinedly complete the inventory of our planet; the patient observer who with his potent genius and his admirable constancy solves the life mysteries of the infinitely small, discovering most important laws for science and industry; the artist whose inspiration makes the hidden fibres of our consciousness to vibrate; the industrious workman who, in his constant struggle with material, elaborates the infinite variety of products which provide for our necessities, commodities, and recreations; the agricultural worker who, defying the rigours of the seasons, provides for our subsistence; and all who do useful work of any kind, are producers, and thus, and thus only, are members of society.

The first social collectivity is the local grouping of the producers following one trade or profession.

The fundamental compact is made between the producer and the group of similar producers.

The productive groups of a locality would—in a rationally organised society—make an agreement by which they would form an entity to facilitate credit, exchange, education, and sanitation; and also make compacts with other localities for exchange and other conveniences in a wider sphere and the necessary general public services. Localities, according to their geographical situation, the quality of their land, etc., would also make special arrangements with other localities to further simplify the means of production, distribution, and exchange.

The land, mines, factories, railways, ships, and all the means of production, transport, exchange, and communication would be declared social property, the property of the whole working community. Thus, the objects of the Revolution are—

1. The dissolution of the State.
2. The abolition of private ownership.
3. The organisation of society based upon the work of all those who are able to produce; the rational distribution of all that which is produced; free access to all the necessities of life to those who are not yet able to produce, and to those incapacitated by old age or physical disability; and the full scientific and physical education of all future producers.

It is in this way that we understand the Social Revolution, and as such that we desire it.

To effectually obtain it, we must organise ourselves, looking upon him that is not for us as against us, whether in open opposition or professing friendship and sympathy.

And we want it to be clearly understood that, as advocates of revolutionary tactics, we are not passive or indifferent, as democrats of all kinds state, because we are not in agreement with them; but, on the contrary, we struggle and fight with profound conviction, filled with enthusiasm, unmasking our secret, conquering our avowed enemies, soon to take part in and realise that great Social Revolution which will usher in the consummation of human welfare and happiness.

ANSELMO LORENZO.

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REVOLT OF THE ENGLISH PEASANTS IN 1381.

It has always occurred to us that the history of revolutionary movements, even if told only in the broadest outlines, would prove a vitally interesting subject for the workers, not only in helping them to understand the position they hold to-day in relation to the ruling classes, but also in helping to make clear to them which methods—tactics, as they are often called—that the people had adopted had proved of the greatest value in their struggles for the conquest of their rights against the oppression of Kings and Parliaments, and against their age-long exploitation by the possessing classes. For these reasons, we shall be very glad if by a brief glance at one or two such periods in English history some interest and discussion is aroused, with the probability of its leading to a closer study of the subject.

The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 has been studied more by recent historians than perhaps any other period in English history, excepting possibly the times of Cromwell and the Revolution of 1688. And this is really not to be wondered at, for the stirring events of those days show us the beginnings of those struggles which Labour has more or less continuously waged through all the intervening centuries to the present day, when we find the civilised nations still preparing for what we hope may prove the final and victorious struggle of the proletariat to conquer once for all its economic freedom.

Let us try to realise the condition of the English peasantry of those early days. In the first half of the 14th century serfdom and villenage were still the general rule amongst the agricultural population, and this numbered three-fourths of the whole. Husband, wife, and children were, if serfs, in those days held in bondage by the lord of the manor. In fact, this lord of the manor practically lived in a little kingdom of his own, for his serfs were compelled to plough his land, gather in his crops, supply the wood for his fires, and generally perform all the menial work of his household. For acts of disobedience he meted out punishment, and frequently had power of life and death over his serfs. His court was held in the manor hall, and outside stood the gallows, and his unhappy victims had no right of appeal against his judgment. The serf, however, had land which he could cultivate after his labour for his lord had been duly performed; and, in addition, many privileges which long custom had established in his favour. So, if he was particularly fortunate and energetic, he might succeed in buying his freedom, and thus pass into the class of peasant farmers, who about this time were beginning to establish themselves as an important factor in medieval social life.

The dreadful famines of 1315 and 1321, and the still more terrible plague or Black Death of 1348, had so thinned the ranks of the labourers that the landowners found it impossible to obtain the labour necessary not only to plough and sow, but even to gather in the crops that were rotting in the fields. It is easy to understand that such a state of things gave the labourers for a time the whiphand of their masters, and resulted in an enormous increase in wages. According to present-day calculations, it varied from 300 to 600 per cent. One example given by Thorold Rogers will be sufficient to indicate this. Before the plague, the harvesting on an average estate cost £3 13s. 9d.; after the plague, for the same amount of labour the cost was £12 19s. 10d. This alone was an economic revolution in the life of the worker, and gave him a taste of what life might be if he could be free and cultivate his land in peace with his neighbours.

Such a state of things was as gall and wormwood to the landowners and the ruling class, and, as we know, they tried to check it with the infamous Statute of Labourers, which was simply a legal method of trying to regulate wages and keep them at their old rates. The cruelties perpetrated by this act, although they failed in their object, did much to sow the seeds of discontent and rebellion. Besides this, however, other agencies were active in preparing the temper of the people for revolt. A wasteful and stupid war in France was rapidly draining the resources of the nation. The monasteries, with their rapacious monks, were hated by the people as much for the political and judicial power they wielded as for their extortions in robbing the people of their land and exacting tribute.

The writer remembers when learning history at school how the Peasants' Revolt, Jack Cade's rebellion, and similar risings, seemed to be events that happened as it were almost instantaneously. An obnoxious law imposed, an angry murmur, the gathering of the people, and a march on London—that was the impression one had of the order of events; and it all seemed the work of twenty-four hours. Nine boys out of ten who leave school, if they have any remembrance at all of the rising of 1381, could only tell you that it was brought about by Wat Tyler killing a tax-collector. And so the events which have been of the greatest importance in the nation's progress are either neglected or falsified and misunderstood.

The works of Thorold Rogers and others who have studied this period with a genuine spirit of inquiry have now made it clear to us that long years of preparation were necessary to arouse the people, and organise them for the great effort that was needed to teach their rulers a lesson they would not readily forget. The propaganda, as we may call it, that was made during the twenty years that preceded the revolt, is full of interest for all sections of the labouring classes, but more especially for us who hope that the present propaganda is preparing

for that great revolution that shall win for all complete economic freedom.

John Ball, "the mad priest of Kent," as he was called, and of whom William Morris has given us such a splendid picture, had been preaching in the villages in all parts for twenty years. He told the people in no measured terms the true causes of their wretchedness and their poverty. All the parasites of the day came in for an equal share of his wrath and denunciation. The merchant, the landowner, the clergy, all those who had their feet on the necks of the people, were boldly denounced. There was no compromise with John Ball. Old-age pensions or State aid for the starving would have been mere mockeries to him. He saw the root of the evil, and he attacked it with all his strength. Even the historians now begin to do him justice, and Green, one of the best of them, says of him: "'Mad,' as the landowners called him, it was in the preaching of John Ball that England first listened to a declaration of natural equality and the rights of man." He had much of the Anarchist spirit, and was a true Communist at heart, for his words have been handed down to us, and we find him telling the people plainly that "things will never go well in England so long as goods be not in common." The people listened eagerly to this new message of hope, and it was taken up and carried through the country by those known as the "poor priests," men who under the influence of Wyclif had thrown off the authority of the Church, and were preaching social revolt to the people. They did their work splendidly in the face of enormous difficulties. From these days practically dates the birth of Trade Unionism, for there is now no shadow of doubt that a complete network of organisation existed amongst the peasants all over the country. Rogers himself admits that Wyclif's poor priests had honeycombed the minds of the upland folk with what may be called religious Socialism. They carried messages from one district to another, and by a system of allegorical references they kept the people in readiness for the signal of revolt. They even collected the funds necessary for the arming of the people and the relief of those who were persecuted, and generally did all the necessary and dangerous work of the Unions without the officialism and red-tape that is considered necessary to-day.

So well did the people keep their secret, that, as we are told, the storm burst on June 10, 1381, without any politician of the time anticipating it. It is remarkable how simultaneously the various counties answered to the call. From Kent to Yorkshire, and from Hampshire to Lancashire, the counties were on flame in a single day. The men of Kent under Tyler were the first to raise the standard of revolt. And a noticeable thing about the Kentish men is that they were not serfs, but freemen fighting in sympathy with their oppressed brethren. They liberated John Ball from Maidstone Gaol, and marched to London, encamping at Blackheath. From here they sent their demands to the King, and as they had many friends in London they speedily followed this up by entering the city itself, where, in conjunction with the apprentices, they completely mastered the authorities, and showed their hatred of John of Gaunt by burning his palace at the Savoy.

One cannot help feeling some surprise at the unerring way the people recognised their real enemies, and made them the objects of popular attack. For instance, the lawyers suffered severely at their hands, and with good cause. All that were captured were put to death, for the peasants said plainly that not till all lawyers were killed would the land enjoy its old freedom again. And when they burnt the manors, they had the intelligence and foresight to burn all the records and documents relating to legal ownership. But there was no indiscriminate massacre, and those who fell, or at least the majority of them, were well-known enemies of the people. In fact, so completely were the tables turned that in the woods where the poor serf, an outlaw, had wandered in May, the grand lord and his family were glad to take refuge in June. A contemporary poet, Gower, tells how the oppressor had to suffer a little of that he had so often inflicted on the labourers. How, in wandering through the woods, he feels no longer the beauty of glade and dell; he feels only the weary horror of the wet woods, the fear of death that dogs his failing footsteps through the brake, the hunger that drives him to gnaw the acorns with the herds of swine and deer. One cannot help wishing that such a retribution might overtake the rascals who are preying on society at the present day, that they might take their turn in the mine to face the horrors of mutilation and death as they toiled for a starvation wage.

(To be concluded.)

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*.

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The Decline of Coercion.

Amid the tumult of the never-ending conflicts that are making the history of the present day it may be possible to rest for a moment and note the *direction* that is being taken in the proposed solution of some very important questions that are of the first importance for mankind. There may be an advantage in doing this, for while on the one hand we see great attempts being made to increase the power of State action, there are just as certainly signs on the other hand of a vigorous and well-considered revolt against this extension of compulsion by the State.

"Governments," said Mr. Asquith the other day, "can do strange things"—and he ought to know, since he has helped a great deal in the doing of them. But it is not the "strange things" Governments do that cause the trouble in the world. It is because they do *evil* things, and do little else. If Anarchists have said this times without number, it is only because they have recognised sooner than many others that the evils of Government are inherent in itself, no matter under what label it might work its deadly mischief. At last we begin to hear an outcry in quarters where but yesterday the old timeworn prejudices in favour of coercion and compulsion were never questioned.

At the Medical Congress at Brighton we could note the breaking down of some of the fossilised notions of prison treatment as applied to society's victims and outcasts. There were grave questionings as to the need for the judge, the gaoler, and the executioner. The same signs of change can be observed in the cry against State compulsion over the treatment of the other victims of middle-class morality—the sufferers from venereal disease. These are developments in circles where conservatism and reaction have mostly held sway. But the revolt against coercive measures breaks out in other unexpected quarters. For instance, in New York, where well-to-do citizens, and even prominent individuals, have been having a taste of police brutality, and have found themselves in conflict with the law. The Mayor of New York in his wisdom had decided that all restaurants must close at 1 a.m., as the great mind had discovered that that was precisely the moment when "all respectable people should be in bed." As a minority of "respectable people" thought otherwise, there was the usual strife which coercion produces, and the Mayor is promised some troublous times.

Of course, all these minor matters are overshadowed by greater instances of the growing spirit of revolt; but they are exceedingly interesting by way of showing *tendencies* which are constantly helping to discredit coercive methods, and which encourage rebellion against authority. At the same time it indicates in a marked degree the amount of unconscious Anarchism that is, as it were, discovering itself. And this leads to a very interesting point, namely, that the germ of Anarchism can be often found in the writings and speeches of those who not only do not acknowledge it, but would repudiate it. The truth seems to be that they take the Anarchist position when it suits their argument, but do not care to acknowledge it. For instance, one can clearly see in the series of articles in the *New Statesman* on "What is Socialism?" written by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb, how they come to the Anarchist position of Freedom and Communism, although they are more immediately concerned with advocating State and municipal action.

Again, let us turn to some of the writings of Bernard Shaw, and once more we shall find an occasional glimpse of Anarchism

illuminating the pages. In the "Quintessence of Ibsenism," for instance, where he combats the Philistinism that would not listen to the disclosures of our conventional hypocrisies or follow the merciless dissection of the body social, Shaw gives us this excellent piece of Anarchism: "If the Englishman had not repudiated the duty of absolute obedience to his king, his political progress would have been impossible." It is so true, that G. B. S. must allow us to add the logical sequence: "If Englishmen do not repudiate their duty to the State, their economic emancipation will be equally impossible." And why is this so? Because, as Shaw tells us, "Every step of progress means a duty repudiated and a scripture torn up."

If all the Anarchism that has filtered through the writings of other moderns could be gathered together, we should not wonder that compulsion by the State is arousing a spirit of hostility.

THE DEATH OF BEBEL.

August Bebel's nearly fifty years of unbroken work to build up in Germany a democratic party with Socialist aspirations, now that death has taken him away, meet with universal respect, which Anarchists also do not deny to a man who up to the very moment of his death did his best for what, to some extent, is a good cause. I need not give details of his life; his autobiography (which he left unfinished) was reviewed in *FREEDOM* in December and January last. Broadly speaking, his life comprises two fairly distinct parts; in the earlier part, scorn and persecution fell to him; in the later, power and glory. But it is noteworthy that he never was an advanced, isolated thinker and fighter. He began as a moderate, surrounded by the rudiments of a party; he led that party slowly and skilfully a certain way in an advanced direction, and made it stop there and grow and thrive, prohibiting with all his might any further advance; and when the fat and overgrown party relapsed into moderation again, he was not the man to stay this backward evolution. This choice between work for real Socialism and for unlimited party extension and power was made beforehand; where success was, there was Bebel, and this created the impression that success was his work. He seems to have felt happy that way; all things came round to him in a way he could never have expected in his early years. Socialism, it is true, has long since become a figurehead; but votes grow by the million. This shows to me that, whilst apparently brimming over with Socialist enthusiasm and the hope of a victorious proletarian revolution, he must in reality have been the coolest and craftiest of politicians. The same conclusion is obvious from the fact that he remained for nearly fifty years at the head of a party, lately grown to be immense, always managing to be on the better side, whilst this party was rent with internal quarrels, jealousies, etc., all along. What an infinite amount of cruel party warfare is necessary to maintain a leader at the top for half a century, when everything around him changes, and he alone means to be a fixture!

This does away with the legend of the benevolent enthusiast, and to me it really opens glimpses into a life given to party slavery, which to anybody who is not devoured by ambition must have been an ordeal. Bebel never felt any pangs over this, it seems. When he wanted a little freedom, he took it, witness his sketch of future society in his book on "Woman." But all others must be dumb tools to work for the strict party programme, or he would be down on them like a slave-driver. He crushed all attempts within his reach to aim at a less authoritarian conception of Socialism; he put his foot on all independent thought, all outbursts of revolutionary feeling. Thus, between Engel's pompous dogmatic pride and Bebel's "practical" policy of risking nothing, abstention from anything that might lead to revolutionary action was erected into a system which Social Democracy is practising in all countries, combining it with the meanest slander of Anarchists, from Proudhon and Bakunin onward to the present day. If Bebel's name is not associated with the most notorious cases of recent years, all was done by his best friends at his side, and he never lifted a finger to ensure a minimum of fair play. Seen from the capitalist side, his figure is imposing—that of a fearless lifelong fighter against Capitalism and a particularly brutal Government; seen from the Anarchist side, he appears very small indeed—an authoritarian to the core, a man as eager to crush freedom as Bismarck himself ever was, and to whom fair play, let alone toleration, was unknown.

We can but look upon honest men of the Bebel type as Freethinkers look upon the early Protestant reformers. These reformers fearlessly attacked the all-powerful Catholic Church, risking life and limb, and succeeded in establishing their new creed. But at the same time they hated and despised Freethinkers and rebels. Luther cursed the rebellious peasants, and Calvin burned Servetus, the freest thinker of his age. They also thought their cause would win by peaceful extension, being unaware of the terrible wars of the seventeenth century by which alone the cause of the Reformation could hold its own in parts of Europe.

Social Democrats behave in a like manner to Anarchists, and Bebel's work built upon this basis must be a failure. All the real struggle lies yet before them. Did he do his best to prepare his party for this struggle?—that is the question. He meant to do well, in any case. Let this be my last word.

N.

THE FRENCH ANARCHIST CONGRESS.

The reaction which during the past year has been sweeping over France, making every progressive movement difficult, has, of course, not left Anarchist propaganda unnoticed. When teachers and professors are dismissed for having dared to criticise unfavourably the Government's three years' service Bill—now voted by Parliament and Senate—little mercy can be expected by Syndicalists, Antimilitarists, and Anarchists. Arrests and searches have become so frequent that they are hardly commented on; the police have prohibited several Anarchist papers from being sold at railway stalls and shops. Though the *Temps Nouveau* has not yet been barred officially, many booksellers are intimidated by the visit of a secret police agent, who drops a hint as to the undesirability of offending the authorities, etc.; and the owner, for the sake of peace, refuses to sell the paper.

On the other hand, during the past few years a number of Individualists, in the name of "the right to live their lives," have committed a series of attacks on property, accompanied by shooting and killing, which have aroused widespread indignation among the people. The perpetrators claimed that their acts were the logical outcome of their Anarchist ideas. The Communist Anarchists considered, however, that these "comrades" had as little right to their plunder as has a capitalist to the produce of the workers. But the harm was done. Simple-minded young comrades were often led away by the "illegalists'" apparent Anarchist logic; outsiders simply felt disgusted with Anarchist ideas, and definitely stopped their ears to any propaganda. A clear and decided re-statement of Anarchism seemed highly needed.

In view of all these circumstances, our French comrades decided to hold a national Congress to discuss our principles and ideas, the means and ways to meet the present reaction, etc.; and last, but not least, to meet old and new friends.

Over a hundred and thirty delegates assembled on August 15, 16, and 17, in the Maison des Syndiqués in Paris. Though it had been made abundantly clear that the Congress was meant as a meeting of Communist Anarchists among themselves, a number of Individualists succeeded in obtaining tickets and making all work impossible for the first day. Only when all the other delegates threatened to leave, the intruders, seeing that the game was up, retired. The Congress then set to work, and soon was deep in interesting discussions. The points of the programme were:—

1. Organisation of Anarchists; means of action and propaganda.
2. Antimilitarism.
3. Syndicalism and the Anarchists; the General Strike.
4. Antiparliamentarian action.
5. Deviations from Anarchist principles; individual revenge; the scientific mania.
6. Various questions:—Mutual aid; the problem of education; the coming International Anarchist Congress.

As to the first point, it was decided to form a Communist Anarchist Federation of autonomous groups, directly federated among themselves or by district, according to the wants of propaganda.

As could be foreseen, this decision had to be discussed from all sides before it was adopted. As is only natural among Anarchists, a good deal of hesitation was felt, as organisation might mean the imposing of authority. But, on the one hand, the necessity of making the most of the existing Anarchist forces in order to combat the strongly organised forces of Capital and the State, and, on the other, the possibility of uniting obligatory contributions of groups with voluntary contributions of members (as practised by the Anarchist Federation of Northern France), led the comrades to the formation of the new Federation. Distribution and financial help to the *Temps Nouveau* will be methodically taken up by the groups. Noel Demeure proposed that groups and individuals should give each other help in the choice of books, in the way to obtain cheap editions, and indicate amusing and suitable literature for the children, etc.

Grave read his report on Antimilitarism. As to desertion, the Congress was of opinion that each case has to be judged on its merits; to advise desertion as a rule is not good.

No. 3 on the agenda—Syndicalism and the Anarchists—had been awaited with great interest. During the past few weeks a good deal of recrimination had passed between Anarchists and the C.G.T. Some prophets had gone so far as to foretell that the Congress would bring a split between Syndicalists and Anarchists. Nothing of the sort happened. On the contrary, the Congress unanimously confirmed the need of a Labour movement; its revolutionary value as a means of organising the working classes; the duty of all Anarchist workers to take part in it; and the necessity of respecting its tactics and organisation.

Criticism of the evils of officialdom in the Unions was heard from various sides; but other comrades rightly pointed out that the only remedy is to make it possible for militant Trade Unionists to become acquainted with the methods and organisation of the Union, so that they can exercise a moral and intellectual influence on their fellow members, and, if need arises, take the place of officials.

The recent Congress of the French Labour Exchanges, where it was decided to resume organising activity more energetically, had been made the subject of numerous attacks on the C.G.T. by libertarian papers, which declared that this body had renounced revolutionary action. This question was also broached at the Anarchist Congress.

It was, however, soon understood by all that a Labour Confederation, in the first place, has to organise and work on an economic basis; if from time to time it succeeds in infusing its members with enthusiasm for revolutionary demonstrations, a period of purely economic activity naturally will follow. A general strike every six months, or whenever the Government undertakes some specially provoking measures, would end in a general political fatigue and discouragement of the working classes.

Francis Delaisi justly says in the *Temps Nouveau*:—"If I have a wish, it is that all those polemics between Syndicalists and Anarchists will stop; that the two movements will go ahead side by side, each on its own ground, using its particular methods; and no longer to see honest militants on both sides spending their time in attacking each other, to the exclusive profit of politicians, who are dangerously penetrating everywhere more and more."

A report on Antiparliamentarism by Delaisi was read, and a discussion started on anti-electoral agitation. Sebastian Faure remarked that in election times people are far too excited to listen to reason, and our propaganda has more chance at other times. This idea was not shared by others, who find that by going to Socialist election meetings the public, already touched by Socialism, can easily be made to listen to Anarchist propaganda.

Comrade Pierrot dealt with point No. 5. He admitted all tendencies in the movement, so long as the central ideal of human emancipation is preserved. If they aim at personal profit, or are but means of adaptation to our present society, they are no longer Anarchist. Individualism has, therefore, nothing to do with Anarchism. Pierre Martin, Brochon, and Broutchoux took part in the discussion. An Individualist present by chance said that as Individualists were being attacked, they ought to be there. As the police and Government were also attacked, presumably they must be there to defend themselves!

Leon Clement presented a report on education. The means of helping comrades and their families when persecuted were dealt with. Various other questions were discussed; and after two manifestoes, one giving an account of the proceedings, the other a statement of principles, had been adopted for publication, the Congress closed.

From all sides the greatest satisfaction has been manifested with the way in which the discussions took place, and the results obtained.

THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM.

What art thou, Freedom? Oh, could slaves
Answer from their living graves
This demand, tyrants would flee
Like a dream's dim imagery.
Thou art not, as impostors say,
A shadow soon to pass away,
A superstition, and a name
Echoing from the cave of Fame.

—SHELLEY.

The necessity for freedom is being demonstrated even to those who have most obstinately denied this real saviour of humanity. It has lately been abundantly proved (and upon the persons of those who have declared that freedom is of a shadowy nature) that liberty is a very real and indispensable thing in human society. Obedience to the law and submission to authority would be the death of progress. Putting aside the question of real economic and political freedom, and taking into account only the struggles for political reform and social amelioration, is it not perfectly evident that law and authority—rule or government of any kind—are opposed to and violently obstructive of human progress?

For example, take the women's struggle for the Parliamentary franchise. Their desire to join in the alleged masterpiece of "Constitutional freedom" was entitled to prompt and sympathetic consideration, if the theory of representative government or majority rule was sound; but it has been met instead by a long record of extreme brutality. And mark this, the women's worst experiences have not been due to the action of ignorant and reactionary mobs, bad as they have been in some cases, but to the machinery of law and government itself. Its whole force, powerless to protect the women against a hooligan crowd, has been employed to crush their agitation. The horror of forcible feeding was maintained till the public conscience could endure it no longer. Then a law of the reign of Edward III. was raked up, and the infamous "Cat and Mouse Act" passed through Parliament in haste. The favourite weapon of the Government, the detective force, was turned against the women, and personal assault of the most disgraceful character has been perpetrated under the protection of legal authority. Even well-known Social Democrats like George Lansbury and John Seurr have not escaped the penalties of exercising their individual rights. We sympathise strongly with them, but hope that their experience will have somewhat lessened their belief in the rule of man over man. It is needless to refer at length to the recent legal attacks upon the liberty of the Press.

Of course, all these events, including the attacks upon the most elementary rights of public speech and meeting, are but a continuation of the age-long conflict between authority and freedom. Anarchists and other revolutionists have had to bear the brunt of the main attack for many years, and, in addition, the open enmity, when not merely the cold indifference, of the political agitators, who, as a rule, dreaded

nothing worse than the association of their names with those of Anarchists!

In passing, it is satisfactory to an Anarchist to note that the experience of prison life endured by so many women and men has shown them the true character of the hideous prison system, as well as the barefaced robbery and ill-treatment of the helpless and ignorant poor which goes on in the police courts and law courts of the country. That system is probably the most monstrous and ugly tyranny ever known in the history of man.

But what stands out most prominently in the whole course of recent agitations? Is it not the necessity of complete *individual* freedom to think and to speak the truth as a man holds it upon all matters affecting himself and his fellows? That, if granted, implies that he must go forth and work amongst the men and women around him. When he does so, he always finds the forces of government arrayed against him, and the law—the written denial of freedom—does the rest. Fanciful theories of law and government, which never correspond with facts, have held out hopes which cannot be realised. The machinery of government, with its awful accumulations of laws—the crystallised errors of mankind—naturally adaptable as it is to the service of corrupt, monopolist, and reactionary forces, must of necessity become a barrier to the achievement of the hopes of even the mildest of reformers. On the practical side alone it is antiquated, inefficient, useless. Obviously, it must be swept away to clear the ground for free association and free organisation, which alone are in consonance with the freedom of the individual and society in general.

At last, there is a reaction from the chimera of State management. Playing with words to disguise the facts is becoming unprofitable. "Nationalisation" is seen to be but the regularisation of class slavery, and "political action" the grave of working-class emancipation. To impose upon the individual conditions of social slavery is plainly not the road to economic freedom. To hold and use the land and wealth of the community for the common welfare in no way necessitates the existence of a huge State organisation, with its plague of law and coercion. Nor is it necessary to call in the aid of a vast horde of politicians and officials to "administrate things." The brains and skill of men and women in every sort of community in any part of the land, in a free co-operative commonwealth, will be quite equal to the tasks they will have to cope with; and, it may be added, the born or trained "leaders of men," the "experts," and so forth will have plenty of scope to exhibit their wonderful practical ability.

It has been the fashion merely to decry the character of the Labour Party, and to call for the advent of another set of men in their place. Without entering into the pros and cons of that discussion, may we ask where, in what country, have better results accrued from that method? Why not face the facts intelligently, and seek, particularly on the economic field, a better method? Especially at the present time, when, as a consequence mainly of recent great conflicts between Labour and Capital, and the increasing economic pressure, the growth of organised Labour is so considerable, the whole intellectual energy of the revolutionary forces should be exerted to prevent it becoming a great unintelligent and cumbrous mass which an alert and unscrupulous enemy may attack with every advantage of initiative and flexibility, and overwhelm with disaster.

That great organisation of Labour should be the means of bringing the workers into intelligent fellowship with each other, bent upon the overthrow of landlordism and capitalism—which naturally involves the destruction of government. Experience has taught us all the need for clear, definite, and fearless exposition of our views in accordance with the development of the times. Wage-slavery must be killed outright; the present struggle to free the proletariat must not be allowed to end in another period of exploitation and subjugation. It is time that revolutionary ideals were permeating the Labour movement through and through. Petty, narrow-minded, and stale conceptions of the needs and methods of Labour must be attacked in their citadel. Outside is good, but inside is better. Some good work has been accomplished, but more is necessary.

There have been many signs of a tendency amongst the workers to take the initiative on their own behalf, to formulate their own demands, to press their claims for justice more drastically, and to resent dictation from those whom they appoint and pay to carry out their wishes. All these tendencies should be encouraged and supported. But it should never be forgotten that education is as essential as agitation and organisation. An ignorant mass is a comparatively easy problem for the astute and powerful minority who dominate society to-day. But an educated people in revolt cannot be easily tricked or crushed. A knowledge of the benefits and possibilities of a free society, if generally possessed by the toilers, would mean a speedy effort to overturn the rotten and ugly social edifice which now exists.

G.

LONDON NOTES.

A social and dance is being arranged by the London comrades for October 11, at the Central Labour College, Earl's Court. Tickets, 9d. single, 1s. double. Details in next issue of FREEDOM. Will all try to turn up and secure success of the undertaking?

A conference of London groups will shortly be called to discuss matters connected with organisation, the International Anarchist Congress, and other matters. Announcement later.

SIDELIGHTS ON SOCIAL SUBJECTS.

The doctors of the world have met in International Congress, and in consequence there has been much discourse on many subjects, perhaps the most arresting being that on the State control of venereal disease. Major H. A. French (R.A.M.C.) advocated confidential medical notification, medical treatment in hospital in the early stages, control and restriction of vice to certain areas, the suppression of loitering, the removal of disorderly persons from towns, punishment for concealing disease, and legal discouragement of the marriage of sufferers for ten years after the date of the contraction of disease.

Dr. Douglas White, of London, stated that there were 500,000 fresh notifications of social disease annually in this country, at least a quarter of which were of the most serious nature. If these figures were even approximately correct, they were face to face with continual national disaster—ruinous in its relation to the birthrate, to infant mortality, and to the national physique.

In face of this, we would ask what have the doctors themselves done to mitigate or help to eradicate this scourge? They are in a peculiarly favoured position for carrying on the fight, but it must be confessed that there have been only a few voices upraised, and these crying in the wilderness. As a profession, they have been supine, having regard to their special knowledge of this subject, and the influence which they as a body possessed.

In criticising Major French's statement, we want to know what control and restriction of vice to certain areas, and all the other specious restrictions advocated, have to do with the eradication of this disease? It is well known that civilisation (of the capitalistic genus) is responsible for the evil; we know that some persons are really sincere in desiring abolition without disturbing the structure of present society, but so vitiated is their outlook on life that they can only conceive of "State control" as a way out of the chaos. Legislate! Legislate! To the end that we may maintain "the system"—keep up a whole army of lawyers, police officials, and M.P.'s paid £400 yearly for services to the capitalist State. So long as exploitation exists, and people are forced to work in uncongenial surroundings, the moral qualities undeveloped or crushed, so long will the canker remain. Legislation will prove itself useless to palliate or efface it. Not restriction of the liberty of the individual is required, but room for the expansion of human life, the opportunity for living in a naturally healthy way. Doctors, before all others, should know that disease is the penalty paid for the violation of natural law, and a knowledge of sociology should give a comprehension of the forces operating within society. Then why suggest legislation as a remedy? Treatment instead of eradication—always the same stereotyped formula. We are tired of it, for not in mere treatment of disease lies the hope of our future health, but in tearing up by the roots the destructive organism sapping the vitality of the race.

It is interesting to read there has been yet another conference. On infant mortality this time. When will these eternal conferences cease, and well-intentioned folk start work in real earnest? So much talk, and so little done. John Burns laid stress on the relation between infant mortality and sexual diseases, but the same old remedy was trotted out: "Government and municipal laboratories." Why not do away with overcrowding and insanitary dwellings through the abolition of poverty? Why not insist on moralising the parents by giving them decent surroundings, and a chance of a human existence? Sometimes we are inclined to doubt the genuineness of the concern at the loss of infant life, and suspect that the wage-slaves are not increasing in numbers sufficiently rapidly to provide food for the machines which they work, and which in turn "scrap" them.

I think it was Ruskin who said that the real wealth of a race was in its children. How bankrupt then we must be, so bankrupt that mothers are left uncared for and underfed, and children starved before they see the light of day. For slum children are born without stamina, born tired in very fact, and, growing up, become the so-called "malingerers" of the National Health Insurance doctors. This is what Sir John Collie says about them: "The vast majority of those who gave the impression of shamming among the working classes, and were classed as malingerers, were people who, though they had to work, were of poor physique, and whose standard of health was at best far below the normal. This was especially so with women." And these are the mothers whose infants cannot survive. The uselessness of it all—the wastage of human life—the ghoul always near waiting to snatch its prey. And this is a scientific age—the irony of it!

The Select Committee on Post Office Servants has completed its heroic labours, and an awe-inspiring Blue Book of 290 pages confronts a grateful and admiring postal service. It is an instructive volume, eloquent in its recommendations for the well-being of Post Office slaves. What conscious power this committee must have felt before issuing a report which in effect chides the workers, implies how well treated they are, and, in short, clearly shows the cloven hoof of a highly organised bureaucracy. How futile that postal workers should have placed faith in political action, and so been granted this committee, is astonishing. What lack of grasp of the forces at work in Parliament! Their defeat has been merited, but the lesson is obvious. Let the Post Office workers realise that they are all units in the

industrial army, let them understand the science of industrial warfare, and when organisation has made them strong enough, they can enforce their claims, because they will have the power to take what they demand.

The *Suffragette* quotes the following from the *Dundee Evening Telegraph and Post*, July 30:—"If it were not that the results are likely to be somewhat serious upon the respect for the law entertained by many whom it is necessary to impress, the struggle between the militant advocates of woman's suffrage and the authorities now going on would be a trifle ludicrous." Here we have the whole bourgeois point of view, "respect for the law entertained," it being so essential to keep people, particularly the workers, good and obedient. Precisely, and that is why we welcome the rebellion behind the women's movement. They have succeeded in making the Government ludicrous—proved how possible it is for an organised tenacious body of people to break down the most tyrannical law, for it is now admitted on all sides that the "Cat and Mouse Act" is breaking down, and the most reactionary Government of modern times has suffered defeat at the hands of a few determined women.

M. HOPE.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Germany.

The strike of the 20,000 workers in the naval construction yards of Hamburg, Bremen, Kiel, Stettin, etc., which broke out and spread with lightning-like rapidity, in spite of the opposition of the officials of the Metal Workers' Union, to which the strikers belong, assumed such proportions and created such an unprecedented situation that the indignant Union officials were obliged to call an extraordinary conference of delegates of the German Metal Workers' Union to decide whether the "indisciplined" rebels of the naval yards should be supported, as many branches of the Union had loudly claimed, or severely reprimanded for their disobedience. There were 144 delegates present at the congress, the 600,000 members of the Union being represented by 52 permanent branch officials and 74 working men.

The congress was a perfect reflection of the spirit reigning in Germany in a large Trade Union centre. The president opened the proceedings with a speech against the independent strikers—"indisciplined," as they are called in the Fatherland, the home of discipline. The speech was one long accusation against those men, who were said to have always evinced a tendency to disobey their leaders and to break out in "wild" strikes. The president attacked strikes in general when declared by "initiative from below." He declared that the executive had acted in a truly democratic spirit by refusing to place the interests of those workers above those of the whole Union. The Hamburg delegate answered this sermon by saying that the reproach of lack of discipline was not sufficient to condemn the strikers. The president had omitted to mention the fundamental fact that great discontent had reigned for years among those workers, who saw all their advantages gained by a hard fight again disputed by the masters. Moreover, the latter could not defend their oppression and greed by the excuse that business was bad; on the contrary, it was in a most flourishing state. The speaker admitted that the men ought to have obtained the sanction of the executive of their Union, as the possibility existed that a general lock-out would be declared by the employers in the whole Empire. "But," said the Hamburg delegate, "if the congress refuses to support the strike, it means that the organisation of the workers of the construction yards will be destroyed."

The horror of indiscipline and the fear of a lock-out evidently haunted the congress, and by 126 votes to 18 it was decided not to sanction the strike, and to demand that the strikers return to work at once. The president was delegated to negotiate, after the resumption of work. Nothing but submission remains for the strikers. Deserted by their fellow Unionists, without strike pay, they know that defeat stares them in the face. "The triumph of discipline," the *Berliner Tageblatt* calls this defeat of initiative by the workers. The employers are already taking measures to make it the triumph of Capitalism.

We have given the details of this case, as it presents all the characteristics of the German centralist Trade Union organisation under Social Democratic guidance. Large Unions with half a million members, rich funds, and yet no fighting spirit allowed in the men. Every attempt at action initiated "from below" is sternly put down by leaders and officials. Can such tactics lead to real organisation of the working classes and their emancipation from wage-slavery? Such a question needs no answer.

Habana, Cuba.

Two cases of injustice to workers are agitating the comrades here. In one case, a farm labourer, Evaristo Vazquez, on asking for money due to himself and others for work done for six months, was met with a refusal by his employers, and threatened with a revolver if he did not give a receipt for the amount claimed. In self-defence, he killed both of his assailants. For this he has been charged with murder.

In the other case, a railway employee, Eduardo Estévez, was also threatened by an engineer with a revolver because he did not work hard enough; and in this case the engineer was killed in the struggle which followed. Estévez was arrested, and is in prison charged with murder. From this we can see that the workers are not allowed to defend

themselves. A committee has been formed for the defence of Vazquez and Estévez, and they ask for protests to be sent immediately to the President of the Republic, Mario G. Menocal, Palacio Presidencial, Habana, Cuba.

AN ANTHOLOGY ON LIBERTY.

Liberty and the Great Libertarians. Edited and Compiled, with Preface, Introduction, and Index, by Charles T. Sprading. 1 dol. 50 c. Los Angeles, Cal.: Published by the Author, 6829 Broad Street.

Our comrade, Charles T. Sprading, is to be congratulated on the thoroughness with which he has compiled this book. Anthologies, as a rule, are rather unsatisfying, giving one the impression that the compiler has left out the essential ideas of the writers from whom he gleans his extracts. But in this case the quotations are so lengthy that the fundamental principles of the writers are easily grasped. The list of names in the contents is a tribute to the author's wide range of reading, and he has had access to books which are not available to every student. For the Anarchist propagandist this book is invaluable, as it provides him with shot and shell for the enemy.

The author's Introduction is a splendid appeal for equal liberty, which he justifies up to the hilt. He says:—"Liberty, wherever applied, has proved a benefit to the race; furthermore, the most important steps in human progress would have been impossible without it; and if civilisation is to advance, that advance can come only as a result of a broader and more complete freedom in human relations. . . . And here is the difference between the Libertarians and the Authoritarians: the latter have no confidence in liberty; they believe in compelling people to be good, assuming that people are totally depraved; the former believe in letting people be good, and maintain that humanity grows better and better as it gains more and more liberty."

"Liberty and the Great Libertarians" is a book to have handy to dip into when one has a quiet hour to spare, and with its 540 pages packed solid with good things, it is well worth its price (6s. 6d.), high though it may seem. Money invested in a good book always pays its owner good interest.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SINGLE TAX PHILOSOPHY.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—Now we are coming nearer, and my task is easy. You say you fail to see where the Single Tax comes in. Here: (1) It is the fulcrum from which all true revolutionists can operate. So long as value arises from land, we can equitably refuse to pay any taxes. A Government lives on taxes, and will die when we take that stand. (2) When the fight is over, as (say) in Mexico, and the land is restored to the people, who are going to monopolise valuable sites? This question requires imagination. Surely I need not appeal in vain to readers of FREEDOM to exercise it. If we dwell in communities, there will be land values, and those values will go to discharge community charges. If, as I think we shall, when liberty prevails, dwell in families, there will be no land values, and no requirement for them. You can have it either way. That is where the Single Tax comes in.—Fraternally yours,

JOHN BAGOT.

St. Anne's-on-the-Sea.

IS THERE A HELL?

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—It is not surprising that your note on "Is There a Hell?"—a subject that, to say the least, has caused the shedding of a considerable amount of ink and tears, and that probably required more space—should leave some doubts in one's mind. I greatly appreciate the return ticket joke at the end; but, I must ask, is it all meant for a joke? Is it a joke that you should ask one to believe that because all the geniuses of the world for fifty years had passed on to that place and had brought science to their service, the place had become such as one often imagines Paradise to be—"grass, flowers, ladies riding around"? If one is meant to believe that science and artesian wells have anything to do with turning hell into a land of delights, I should like to ask why science has not helped to do something similar here.

True, science has discovered dynamite, invented machine-guns, found water in dry places, distilled whisky; yet nowhere do I see that science has blessed the poor and despised, or made mankind more kindly disposed. Hell, R. C. Ingersoll tells us, was born of the chatter of baboons, eyes of snakes, the grin of hyenas; but is it so difficult to feel that grins of hyenas, etc., are rather born of hell than hell born of them? True, we see the grin of hyenas here, and mistake it for cause instead of effect; as we see misery in mine and factory, and mistake it for the real hell, which is rather in office and parlour of director and shareholder, from whence they are controlled.—Yours

G. A. R.

Bath.

When the State is corrupt, then the laws are most multiplied.—*Tacitus.*

PROPAGANDA NOTES.

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

CHOPWELL (Co. Durham).—The slogan of revolt is still being sounded in this part of the Northern coalfield, outdoor propaganda having been brisk considering the difficulties that beset our path. Spen was visited on Sunday, July 13, when some pertinent questions were asked and answered anent our views on leadership and officialism. Saturday, July 19, was taken to be "the day" on which to move our unearthly (?) ideal right into the heart of the leaders' pleasant pastures at Durham, it being the annual gala of the Durham miners. We made a speciality of the pamphlet "Direct Action v. Legislation," advertising it by a poster; and we set the other books and pamphlets out on the grass to catch the eye. Although the sales were not up to the expectations of optimistic comrades, nevertheless we created quite a sensation by daring to sell Anarchist literature to our brother slaves of the lamp and pick. A meeting was held after the big guns had fired off their usual cant and humbug about "the identity of interests between Capital and Labour," and "the wonderful progress we are making." Speeches on the need for direct action and revolution were given by our comrades Jack Griffiths (South Wales), Will Lewcock (Ruskin College), George Harvey (I.W.G.B.), W. Mee (I.W.G.B.), and Will Lawther.

Advantage was taken of the visit of our comrade Griffiths to do some propaganda, and meetings were held on July 20 at Chopwell in the morning, and at Crawcrook at night. Westerhope, a colliery village in Northumberland, was visited on the 21st, when a discussion took place in the local Working Men's Club. The makings of a fine group are to be found there, where our comrade Will Lewcock is doing good work. Tuesday, the 22nd, was comrade Griffiths's last day amongst us, and it was utilised by a fine meeting at Spen.

Visits like our comrade's will do more to generate a feeling of unity than all the big demonstrations where empty platitudes are rolled off. The workers are eager to lend a listening ear to one who, like themselves, is a worker eager for real freedom, rather than to those whose visits are used as the means whereby they can climb a little farther on to the backs of their fellows. We want them all off our backs, instead of lifting more on. This view was well put before a Chopwell audience by Will Lewcock on August 10, when he spoke on "State Capitalism or Freedom?" He showed how the Labour Party's State Mines Bill would not solve the poverty problem for the miner; rather would it tend to create a huge snobocracy, like the mine inspectors whom the State pays to-day.

As an outcome of some questions asked at a meeting held by the local branch of the I.L.P., a debate is to take place on Sunday, September 14, in the Club House, Chopwell, at 6.30 p.m. The subject will be: "That the emancipation of the working class can be brought about more readily by direct action than by legislation." Will Lawther (Workers' Freedom Group) will take the affirmative, and George Gallaher (I.L.P.), Annfield Plain, the negative.

We hope to open our club premises in Derwent Street shortly, when all will be welcome to take part in the various activities of a live propaganda group, who are out for freedom.

E. C. H. O.

MARYLEBONE ANARCHIST GROUP.—A few energetic comrades have joined together under the above title, and have decided to hold meetings in Regent's Park. The group urgently ask all those who formerly took part, but dropped away, to now come to the rally and form a real fighting force in Marylebone. Letters may be addressed to F. Wendt, 9 Manette Street, Charing Cross Road. Let us hear from you soon. Group meetings every Saturday, 5.30, at same address.

F. W.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- On Liberty of the Press for Advocating Resistance to Government.* By James Mill. Introduction by Theodore Schroeder. 15c. New York City: Free Speech League, 56 East 59th Street.
- Political Socialism: Capturing the Government.* By B. E. Nilsson. 10c. Portland, Oregon: Secretary I.W.W., 309 Davis Street.
- The Crime of Conspiration.* By H. E. Holland. 3d. Sydney: Marxian Press, 115 Goulburn Street.
- Syndicalism: Its Basis, Methods, and Ultimate Aim.* By Guy Bowman. 1d. London: The Author, 4 Maude Terrace, Walthamstow, E.
- The Nationalization of Mines and Minerals Bill.* By Henry H. Schloesser. 1d. London: The Fabian Society.
- What about the Rates? or, Municipal Finance and Municipal Autonomy.* By Sidney Webb. 1d. London: Fabian Society.
- Riches and Poverty.* New Edition, Revised and Enlarged. By L. G. Chiozza Money, M.P. 1s. net. London: Methuen and Co.
- Animals under British Rule.* By the Hon. Mrs. Charlton. 2d. London: Animals' Friend Society.
- Da Porta da Europa.* By Neno Vasco. 50c. Lisbon: Published by the Author.
- Entre Camponeses.* By Errico Malatesta. 5c. Brazil: Grupo de Educaçao Social.
- Georgicas: Ao Trabalhador Rural.* By Neno Vasco. 10 reis. Lisbon: Terra Livre, R. das Gáveas, 55, 1o.

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- Pamphlet Printing Fund.**—A. Hazeland 4s 6d, Essex 1s.

EAST LONDON ANARCHIST GROUP.

Sunday Mornings—Victoria Park, 11.30; Ridley Road, Dalston, 12.
Wednesdays—Outside Hackney Town Hall, Reading Lane, 8 p.m.

West London Socialist League (Direct Action).

Walham Green Church, North End Road, Fulham, every Tuesday evening at 8.15; and 2nd and 4th Fridays in the month, same time and place.

The Grove, Hammersmith, every Sunday evening at 8.15.

PAMPHLET AND BOOK LIST.

- ANARCHIST COMMUNISM: ITS BASIS AND PRINCIPLES.** By PETER KROPOTKIN. 1d.
- ANARCHISM: ITS PHILOSOPHY AND IDEAL.** By P. KROPOTKIN. 1d.
- ANARCHIST MORALITY.** By PETER KROPOTKIN. 1d.
- ANARCHY.** By E. MALATESTA. 1d.
- THE WAGE SYSTEM.** By P. KROPOTKIN. 1d.
- A TALK ABOUT ANARCHIST COMMUNISM BETWEEN TWO WORKERS.** By E. MALATESTA. 1d.
- THE STATE: ITS HISTORIC ROLE.** By PETER KROPOTKIN. 2d.
- EXPROPRIATION.** By PETER KROPOTKIN. 1d.
- DIRECT ACTION v. LEGISLATION.** By J. BLAIR SMITH. 1d.
- THE SOCIAL GENERAL STRIKE.** By ARNOLD ROLLER. 1d.
- THE PYRAMID OF TYRANNY.** By F. DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS. 1d.
- LAW AND AUTHORITY.** By PETER KROPOTKIN. 2d.
- THE PLACE OF ANARCHISM IN SOCIALISTIC EVOLUTION.** By PETER KROPOTKIN. 1d.
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- MEMOIRS OF A REVOLUTIONIST.** By P. KROPOTKIN. (American Edition). 8s. 6d. post-free.
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- ANARCHISM.** By Dr. PAUL ELTZBACHER. 6s. 6d.; postage 4d.
- NEWS FROM NOWHERE.** By WILLIAM MORRIS. Paper covers, 1s.; cloth, 2s.; postage 2d.
- A DREAM OF JOHN BALL.** By WILLIAM MORRIS. 2s., postage 3d.
- FAMOUS SPEECHES OF THE EIGHT CHICAGO ANARCHISTS.** 1s 3d, postage 2d.
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