

Freedom

VOL. XXXIV.—No. 376.

OCTOBER, 1920.

MONTHLY: TWO PENCE.

NOTES.

The Mining Crisis.

We can hardly believe that a strike of miners is now probable. The interminable discussions and interviews have been spread over so many weeks that the Government has had every opportunity to complete its preparations to meet the blow. At the same time, the differences of opinion in the Triple Alliance are so evident that a concerted move seems out of question. The Government has out-manceuvred the miners' leaders, and in putting forward a bonus for increased output it is trying to get the Unions to act as disciplinary organisations, in preventing absenteeism and slacking. At present the bonus is to be paid on the output of the whole of the coalfields, but if, as is likely to happen, an increased output is brought about only in certain districts, the miners in those districts will claim a bonus according to the local output. This will tend to bring about payment by districts again and split the Federation. This is what the mine-owners are working for. Looking at the matter broadly, however, it seems to us that the agitation is a sheer waste of time and energy, which might be more profitably spent in agitating for the expropriation of the capitalists in every industry—including agriculture. Lloyd George threatens the miners that, in the event of a strike, "the whole resources of the State" will be used against them. Therefore, if Labour intends to fight Lloyd George and the capitalists it should get ready for a revolutionary expropriation of the land and all the instruments of production, and not confine itself to a mere paltry demand for an increase of miners' wages, which would soon be neutralised by the rising cost of living. Besides, "Expropriation of all capitalists" would rally the whole of the workers, who are at present only lukewarm in their support of the miners. "Thorough" should be the watchword.

Reprisals in Ireland.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that the organised destruction carried out by the "Black and Tans" is directly instigated by the Government. Unable to cope with Sinn Fein raiders by direct methods, they have deliberately adopted this method of "frightfulness" in the hope that it will terrorise the Irish people into putting a stop to the activities of the Sinn Feiners. In the *Manchester Guardian* of September 27 General Gough writes: "I have some evidence which I am not at liberty to quote, which makes me strongly suspect that actual murder is organised as a method of Irish government." This charge seems only too true, for on September 15, speaking to a representative of *Le Petit Parisien*, General Macready, Commander-in-Chief in Ireland, said: "We are ready—ready to suppress ruthlessly. . . . It might be necessary to shoot half a hundred individuals, and then order would be restored." This has always been the British Government's way in Ireland for seven centuries. Even Tsarism could not show a bloodier record than Britain's in Ireland. It is the memory of that fearful record that has bred in the Irish an undying determination to break the chain that binds them to England, and some of the links of that chain are now at the breaking point. The English people, who shed so many crocodile tears over "poor little Belgium," now look idly on whilst Irish men and women are fighting for their freedom.

Lost—a Council of Action.

The splendid enthusiasm of the Labour Movement in the first weeks of August in favour of drastic action to stop the war against Russia has evaporated. The red-hot speeches which their leaders then made inspired the workers with the hope that at last the time had come when they could strike a blow that

would cause the capitalists to cease the war on starved and bleeding Russia. At that moment we believe the workers would have responded to any call for action. But that moment has passed. The inaction of the leaders who spoke at the Central Hall on August 13 proves that they have acted the part of traitors to the men and women who were ready to support them, or else it proves that they have not the backbone of a louse and were frightened by Lloyd George's threats. Their cowardice is now reflected in the changed tone of the Press and politicians. When the Council of Action was formed, these gentry said that the Council was pushing an open door; everybody was in favour of peace, and they were awfully shocked when Millerand supported Wrangel. Now the Press and the politicians are howling again for Lloyd George to send Krassin back to Russia, and using the British prisoners at Baku as an excuse for another ultimatum. If the British workers really wish to stop the war on Russia it must now be evident to them that they must act on their own initiative and get rid of their leaders.

The Comps' Dignity.

Members of the London Society of Compositors recently held a meeting to consider a resolution which said: "We emphatically state the irreducible minimum wage compatible with the dignity of the Craft should not be less than £6 per week." If compositors or other workers were paid according to the "dignity of their craft" they would draw very low wages. Under present conditions, what dignity can there be in the craft of any workman, even of a compositor? Think of the awful amount of rubbish poured out of the printing offices of this great city. Think of the terrible output of lies every twenty-four hours. Only think of the daily vilification of the Labour movement that appears in the Press day after day and week after week. And after these comps. had held their meeting think how dignified they must have felt when they found that the reports they had sent in to the Press were either put into the waste-paper basket or cut down to two or three lines, so as to make room for a "Bolshevik atrocity," which they knew to be a lie. No; there could be no dignity in the craft of a compositor, even if he drew £50 a week, as long as he allows himself to be used as a mere machine to make profits for the Northcliffes and the Hultons and other millionaire newspaper proprietors. Under the wage-system dignity of craft is impossible. Dignity will come when the workers control their lives and industry and use their craft for the betterment and not the debasement of humanity.

The Unemployed.

Machinery is standing idle in this country and hundreds of thousands are out of work, whilst millions of people in Europe lack the bare necessities of life. Why? Is it because the workers do not want to work? No; it is because the masters, who own the factories and the machinery cannot make a profit by setting them to work. The capitalists are calling daily for greater production, and at the same time are directly responsible for the lack of production. Really, if the results were not so tragic the position would make one laugh. Heroes, ex-service men, men who "went over the top" in France and Flanders are now standing at street corners or tramping all over the great towns looking for a job, however poor the pay may be. They fought to prevent the alien from invading the country and now find themselves aliens in the country they fought for. Robbed of their birthright, the land, they are now as helpless to get their own living as the smallest babe. Respect for bits of parchment scribbled on hundreds of years ago is the barrier that keeps them from tilling the soil and procuring food for themselves and their children, and until this superstition is driven out of their heads, unemployment and starvation will be their lot. We shall not have a land fit for heroes until we have heroes fit for the land.

ERRICO MALATESTA.

ROUGH OUTLINES OF HIS LIFE UP TILL 1920.

By M. N.

(Continued from last month.)

I know nothing of his domestic ties; he had no occasion to speak to me of his mother; his father he mentioned with sympathy. When the latter died, large sums owing to him were outstanding; but the son, from principle, did not have them collected, and thus was about ruined. As he spent almost exactly half of each of the years 1873-74-75 in prison, his regular studies probably came to an end about 1872 or so, which does not mean, of course, that he would neglect intellectual activity from a given date. His few simple wants may have been met by occasional work, as they were later on by more continuous skilled work. He never held any paid or titled position in any Labour movement, nor did he sell his intellectual work in any journalist way; this made him independent and ready for action at any moment of his life.

After his release at Trani (August, 1875) Malatesta soon went to Locarno, staying a few days with Cafiero in the "Baronata" (Cafiero's house); and making a last visit to Bakunin at Lugano. The very grave and painful dissensions which had arisen between Cafiero (whom James Guillaume and Ross joined in this) and Bakunin, beginning in July, 1874, and leading to a complete rupture (September 25), had then subsided into silent animosity; and Malatesta, the friend of both, was happily never drawn into these matters. He could but recognise Bakunin's physical sufferings and depression, which had put an end to his revolutionary efforts. With Cafiero he consulted about the reorganisation of the Alliance. Both Bakunin and Cafiero desired Malatesta to go to Spain to liberate another member of the intimate group—Alerini, of Marseilles, in prison since 1873 (Barcelona movement), the same who had helped Bakunin to escape from Marseilles to Genoa in the late autumn of 1870. On this journey Malatesta also saw Morago at Madrid, the most advanced Spanish Internationalist of those years. All was rigidly suppressed on the surface, but the International continued as a secret body. In Cadiz he was admitted to the prison like to an hotel, and passed a day there with Alerini and thirty or forty of the Cartagena, Alcoy, and Cadiz prisoners of 1873. For a few gold pieces he visited the town with Alerini and two warders, who were made drunk; but Alerini would not go away, and they had the trouble of restoring the drunken warders to the prison. The next day a single gold piece and one warder sufficed, but Alerini once more would not go, so Malatesta gave it up; Alerini's revolutionary days were over.

Malatesta then went to Naples, where he saw Stepniak, and soon after to Rome, where he met Cafiero, Grassi, and others. This private conference, held in the spring of 1876, received a last message from Bakunin (who died June 1), transmitted by Serafino Mazzotti. Here the reorganisation of the International and a congress to be held in the autumn (Florence, October) were decided upon. Malatesta was forced by Nicotera's Government to leave Rome and had to live at Naples.

His idea, however, was to fight in Servia against the Turks. The impulse to join the Herzegovinian insurgents, in 1875, seized some Russian revolutionists like Stepniak, Klemens, and Ross, who went there, but soon returned disappointed. In Italy, Garibaldi encouraged this movement; Celso Cerrotti, the link between Internationalism and Garibaldianism, and others took part, also noted Internationalists like Alceste Faggioli, etc. It was for the latter, I believe, to some extent a matter of prestige; since the Garibaldians fought, they would not stay at home, and on the eve of the Russian War anti-Turkish sentiment ran high, from Gladstone to Garibaldi. So Malatesta also decided upon war on Turkey, though Bakunin had sent him a verbal message that such doings reminded him of the good people who made socks for the heathen negroes far away and forgot the half-naked poor at home. Malatesta—so S. Mazzotti told me—replied somewhat in the sense that wherever war is made on Carthage, Rome is defended—and set out for Trieste, was turned back; set out again and got as far as Neusatz (opposite Belgrade); thence he was sent back in about thirty-day instalments to Udine, where

the Italians mistook him for a runaway custom officer, and, after keeping him for a fortnight, forced him to return to Naples.

In Naples (summer of 1876) he passed some time with Cafiero and Emilio Covelli, one of the best thinkers of the International; and there, in their walks on the seaboard, they discussed the economic theories of Collectivism and Communism (to each according to his deeds or needs), and concluded that whilst it was impossible to fix the exact value of the individual work of each person, and as the adoption of a uniform standard would imply authoritarian equalisation, the absence of any such system and free access of all to the products of labour according to the needs of each person, would best satisfy the claims of freedom. This was one of the beginnings of Communist Anarchism, another being a small pamphlet (1876) by a Lyons Anarchist, F. Dumatheray, then a refugee at Geneva, and with Ferrare and others belonging to the advanced section, "L'Avenir"; another, Peter Kropotkin's writings, which commenced not very long after.

The Italian International was the first body to accept Communist Anarchism (in place of Collectivist Anarchism), at their congress held under great difficulties on October 21-25, 1876, at Florence. Thence Malatesta and Cafiero visited the General Congress of the International, held at Berne, October 26-30, where they met with comrades of various less advanced shades of opinion. The minutes of the Congress (Berne, 1876, 112 pp.) should be consulted here.

After the Congress, Cafiero, then very poor, having been cheated of a large sum of money, and Malatesta went all about Berne to look for work, and worked for some time in the building trade.

* * * * *

Fresh action, however, was their desire, and this time no general co-operation of advanced parties was looked for as in 1874. The prevailing idea had become that of propaganda by the revolutionary fact—that is, revolutionary acts, whatever their immediate success or sacrifice might be, were expected to act upon the people as an example and a stimulant, and were thus considered useful as such. This is the origin of a number of acts which so-called practical people never could understand, just as unselfishness always remains a mystery to some.

Between Florence and Berne Cafiero and Malatesta settled upon such an undertaking, the starting of a local insurrection in a mountainous Neapolitan province; they expected to hold out for some weeks or longer, and thus to give an impetus to other local or more general revolts all over the country.* Their means were very slender; a Russian female comrade, Mme. Sm——, gave some thousands of francs, and Cafiero gave almost the rest of his once fair fortune. In Naples their plans were furthered by Stepniak, who wrote an insurrectionary manual for them.† About 300 local people were enrolled, and numbers of comrades arrived from more northern parts of Italy. The movement was only possible in May, when the snow was gone from the mountains and sheep would afford food. But the principal local agent, a quasi-revolutionary ex-Garibaldian, was a traitor, and all those whom he knew were arrested, save Malatesta and Cafiero, who kept in hiding. This prompted them to start at once, even in April, and with no Southern or local people among them, except Malatesta and Cafiero, which made the peasants mistrust and dislike them. However on April 6 the twenty-eight started and took to the mountains for Letino and Gallo, two villages where they burned the official records, gave confiscated goods to the people, and were, strange to say, made welcome by the local priests, who proved to them—one by unveiling the indescribable filth underneath his clerical garments—that they were as poor as

* Bakunin in 1869 had given similar advice to some Bulgarian revolutionists who had consulted him at Geneva. This fact was no doubt unknown to the Italians of 1876, who above all wanted to avoid the mistakes made in 1874.

† A manuscript copy of this little handbook was given to me by Z. Ralli, an old Bakunian, at Bucarest in 1893, to be returned to his old friend Stepniak. When in 1894 I consulted Stepniak about his impressions of Bakunin (1875), he was in a somewhat moderate mood, and began to combat Anarchist violence. This was or was not the right moment to hand him back his old handbook for Anarchist bands—anyhow, there it was before his eyes, and he slowly but surely recognised it. His face then underwent some wonderful changes, from blank wonder to a peculiar kind of smile, and somehow his denunciation of violence was adjourned. I did not then know the precise history of the manuscript or I should have copied it. It may still repose among Stepniak's papers.

anybody could be, and declared them to be very good young men, the true followers of Christ. But all round them the military gathered and nothing but snowy mountainous deserts were open to them, which led to their final surrender after great exhaustion.

They remained in preventive imprisonment at Capua, Malatesta's birthplace, for one year (until April, 1878), when a political amnesty after the death of Victor Emanuel I abolished the main charges against them. But as two gendarmes had met with their death, it was proposed to indict them for manslaughter, and they passed four months more in the prison of Benevento. This scandalous distortion of the amnesty made the jury anxious to acquit them (August, 1878), after a week's trial. F. S. Merlino was one of their counsel and wrote "A proposito del processo di Benevento" (1878). Details are most conveniently found now in J. Guillaume's "L'Internationale."

Cafiero while in prison wrote his abbreviation of Marx's "Capital." Malatesta explained to me that they all, Bakunin also, theoretically fully accepted the criticism of Marx applied to the capitalist system. At that time, after the Benevento attempt, fifty or more copies of the French translation of "Capital" were bought at Naples by the general public; previously hardly a single copy had been sold.

* * * * *

After the trial Malatesta spent a month at Naples, and then travelled to Egypt. After Passanante's attempt on the life of King Umberto, when a counter-manifestation against a patriotic outburst was being prepared, Malatesta, Parini, and Alvino were arrested, and Malatesta was transported by ship to Beyrout (Syria), where the Italian Consul and he strongly disagreed as to how he should be further disposed of. Finally, he worked his way, helping unloading, with a French ship from port to port, the captain, a brave man, refusing to hand him over to the Italian authorities, who bargained for this, at Smyrna, Castellamare, and Leghorn, landing him safe at Marseilles, whence he travelled to Geneva.

At that time the *Révolté* (preceding the *Temps Nouveaux*) was about to be founded (No. 1 appeared February 22, 1879) by P. Kropotkin and others. Malatesta took part in the preparatory meetings. After a short time he and several other Italian Anarchists were perpetually expelled from Switzerland; the publication of a manifesto or some similar expression of their ideas (to be found in the contemporary papers) furnished the immediate pretext.

Malatesta went to Roumania, where he found some employment, but had to leave owing to fever. He then made his way to Paris, where Cafiero, after passing some time in Switzerland, had also gone (about 1879).

In Paris he witnessed and assisted at almost the origin and first growth of the Anarchist movement, which has since continued without interruption. It had been initiated about 1877 by secret relations with French Anarchist Internationalists in the Jura Mountains and at Berne (Louis Pindy, of the Paris Commune, Paul Brousse, etc.), and Andrea Costa had gone to Paris as their confidential agent to spread the ideas and organisation of the International. Costa was soon arrested and kept rather long in prison, where his ideas underwent a change towards Parliamentarism. Cafiero and Malatesta were made of better stuff, and valiantly explained Anarchism to the rising French groups. V. Tcherkesov, after his years of Siberian exile dating from the Netchaev trial of 1871, was their friend and comrade; and Jean Grave also dates from this time. Needless to say, the Government soon weeded out the foreigners, and Cafiero and Malatesta were thus expelled from France (in 1880).

Cafiero left for Switzerland; Malatesta, who worked as a mechanic, changed his quarters and stayed until he was arrested at a Commune celebration. He had the passport of a Swiss comrade, under whose name he was expelled again and sent to London. He chose to return to Paris, for which he was sentenced to six months, which he exchanged for four and a half months of solitary confinement.

I have a vague recollection that after this he went to Brussels, and I believe that it was then he challenged Paul Lafargue to a duel, Lafargue having insulted Spanish Anarchist Internationalists, like Morago and others, then dead or in prison. Lafargue refused to fight, on principle, which was his right, but did not withdraw

his insults. By the way, Lafargue, ever since 1872 the constant enemy and insulter of Bakunin and his comrades, was not sufficiently anti-Anarchist in the eyes of his father-in-law, Karl Marx. For on November 11, 1882, Marx cries out in a letter to Engels: "Longuet, the last Proudhonist, and Lafargue, the last Bakunist, may the Devil come to fetch them!" Marx haunted by the imagination that his two sons-in-law were—the last Anarchists!—in that enlightened spirit Anarchism was understood by Marx!—whilst Anarchists like Cafiero in prison put their soul into explaining and making accessible the work of Marx (see above).

Malatesta, therefore, was then or at a slightly different time in Belgium and unquestionably expelled, which made him finally settle in London some time in 1880 or 1881, where he remained for two or three years.

He was a delegate at the International Revolutionary Congress (summer of 1881) with Kropotkin, Merlino, John Neve, and others, including the revolutionary and Anarchist initiators of the English movement, Joseph Lane, F. Kitz (I believe), and a few others. An article on Garibaldi (after his death) will be found in one of the three issues of Lothrop Withington's *Democratic Review* (1882), almost the first one I can think of signed by Malatesta. Papers played a relatively small part in the Italian International from 1871 onwards, though very many were published. They were so constantly persecuted and suppressed, and the propagandists themselves hunted about or imprisoned, that there was little room or leisure for theoretical work or for large papers in general. Nevertheless, the two *Martello*, the *Anarchia* of Naples (by Covelli), the *Avvenire* of Modena, etc., had a little more stability, and in some of these Malatesta's early writings are likely to be found. In London, in the summer of 1881, Cafiero, Malatesta, and Solieri issued the prospectus of *L'Insurrezione*, a paper that was never published.

In 1881-82 Malatesta must have undergone the most painful impressions, seeing at his side the intellect of Cafiero decline and almost vanish. Andrea Costa's defection had been that of a *viveur* who has had enough of the meagre fare of Anarchism and goes over to the opulent table of Parliamentary power; a glance at Costa's exterior (I saw him at the Paris Congress of 1889) settled that problem. Also Cafiero, in a letter printed in the *Naples Grido del Popolo* of July 21, 1881, speaks with utter contempt of Costa's ambition, vanity, and hypocrisy. But somehow Cafiero's mind got obscured, and whilst he publishes "God and the State" with Elisée Reclus (Geneva, 1882), and begins to prepare a biography of Bakunin (collecting valuable documents which then got lost or are hopelessly mislaid), he puts before Malatesta, Ceccarelli, and others the first outlines of a plan of Parliamentary tactics which nothing can dissuade him from. At the same time his friends saw by ever so many details of personal life that he was insane. In this state he hurried from London to Locarno (March, 1882), then to Milan, and openly proclaimed his new ideas in a letter published October 27, 1882. Almost at the same time he is placed in an asylum, and after several months in a terrible state conducted to the Swiss frontier, where he tries to commit suicide. After some improvement owing to the kind treatment of Bakunin's Ticinese friend E. Bellerio, he insists on again entering Italy, where on February 13, 1883, the gates of the asylum closed behind him; he was discharged many years after, a wreck in health, and soon died.

Even the Parliamentary Socialists could not gain much by this tragedy, but the case of Costa was very much more exploited. Costa, to make himself valuable and to escape from the shameful isolation of a renegade, did all he could to induce others to join him. Then the elections of protest, to rescue the imprisoned Cipriani, whose election would not be valid, drew another red herring across the path of the revolutionary movement. And many Anarchists had been crushed, ruined, silenced by ten years of constant persecution.

It was then that Malatesta came forward and for the first time took the principal weight of the struggle on his shoulders, fighting this time not with arms but with arguments to maintain revolutionary Anarchism and to dispel the fallacies and allurements of Parliamentary tactics.

(To be concluded next month.)

FREEDOM.

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

Monthly, Twopence; post-free, 2½d. Annual Subscription, 2s. 6d. post-free.
U.S.A. and Canada, \$1.00. France and the Continent, 2s. 6d.
Wholesale price, 1s. 6d. per dozen (13) post-free in the United Kingdom.

All communications, exchanges, etc., to be addressed to

Freedom Press, 127 Ossulston St., London, N.W.1.

The Editors are not necessarily in agreement with signed articles.

Notice to Subscribers.—If there is a blue mark against this notice, your subscription is due, and must be sent before next month to ensure receipt of paper.

Money and Postal Orders to be made payable to FREEDOM PRESS.

Why Labour Fails.

Why is it that, in spite of their great numbers and large organisations, the workers have not yet succeeded in gaining their freedom? The reason is simple: they do not understand the capitalist system. They always imagine that if they can gain higher wages and shorter hours, all will be well. But they fail to realise the great strength of the capitalists, which strength lies in their possession of the land and all the raw material from which wealth is produced. So long as they are allowed to retain possession of these things the workers are helpless. In time of a strike the workers have to fall back on the paltry funds in their Union coffers, which are soon exhausted; whilst the capitalists, who are comparatively few in number, can rely on getting supplies no matter how long the strike may last. The great strikes of recent years, in some cases almost general strikes, have absolutely failed to better the condition of the workers because they have always left the instruments of production in the hands of the masters. The day after the strikes were settled the workers returned to factory, mill, or mine, and immediately resumed their old occupation of producing profits for their employers. The old relationship of master and slave remained untouched.

The miners, thanks to the propaganda of the Socialists, have at last realised this fact, and now they have added nationalisation of mines to their programme. But here again they are chasing a rainbow. Nationalisation of the mines means that the mineowners are to be paid the value of their mines by the Government, who will then proceed to work the mines for the "benefit of the nation." But the miners will still be working for the capitalists, who will draw interest on their bonds from the money which the Government gets by the sale of the coal. But instead of having mineowners for their bosses, the workers will have Government officials, who will probably be more tyrannical than the mineowners, because they will always be able to put forward the plea of "national interest" for all their actions. Even if the workers are allowed to elect representatives to the board of control, it will not help them a bit, because of the fact that so long as Capitalism lasts the mines will be run for profit. The Post Office is worked on that basis, and during the war the railway shareholders had their profits guaranteed by the Government, who controlled the railways. Therefore, nationalisation is not a remedy for our evils.

Which ever way the worker turns he finds the barbed wire entanglements of Capitalism in his way, and it is impossible for him to escape. This means that if he really and truly wishes to live the life of a full-grown man, and not the life of a wage-slave, he must join with his fellows in smashing the capitalist machine. There is no other way out. Share of control is useless, although it will probably be given by the employers so as to stave off anything more revolutionary. Nationalisation is useless because the wage system will still exist. He and his fellows have only one way out—they must abolish monopoly in all its forms and insist on free access to the land and raw materials. And in order to prevent a new form of government growing up again they must set their faces like flint against any attempt of others to force themselves on them as officials. They are as much parasites as are the mineowners, and they will creep in in all sorts of disguises unless a careful watch is kept. Officials always expect a larger share and more privileges than the workers. Beginning as servants, they end up as bosses. The official element in every country is a standing example. Politicians, priests, Trade Union officials, party officials—all are tarred with the same brush. Nationalisation is supported by many Trade Union officials and politicians because they hanker after the well-paid jobs it will bring in its train, which jobs will usually be given to

those who have the greatest influence in the Labour and political movements.

Therefore, if we are to avoid the evils of Capitalism we must make a clean sweep of all these parasites and work for equality between all men and women, avoiding compulsion of all kinds. Compulsion and officialdom are inseparable from Capitalism, but when Capitalism is swept away there will no longer be any necessity for them. Voluntary or Anarchist Communism will then be the basis of society; but we must not forget that Nature does not build all men and women in one mould, and in our new society we must allow free scope for groups and individuals to make experiments, economic and social. But any attempt to reintroduce monopoly and exploitation could not be tolerated; they have already caused enough misery during the centuries they existed.

THE SEIZURE OF FACTORIES IN ITALY.

The event of this month and of many months is the seizure of the factories by the Italian metal workers, who thus for the first time during the revolt of Labour asserted the right of the workers and the labouring community to wield the means of industrial production by their own will and not as the tools of the capitalist proprietors only. Efforts to seize the land and to cultivate it without landlords have preceded it in Italy, Mexico, and elsewhere. Of course, the seizure of the whole industrial production in the name of new State organisations in Russia, since the end of 1917, in Hungary for some months in 1919, is well known, but represents another type of action, just as the legalised attempts at socialisation in some central European countries do. The distance from the usual routine strike action to this bold step of seizing the factories instead of being driven from them into the streets to starve until some arrangements are made—this is the point here, and the distance is enormous, the step in advance a large and real one, in the right direction.

If our old comrade James Harragan were still among us, this news would be the crowning delight of his long life. Who does not remember how ten, twenty, thirty years ago, in season and out of season, at countless meetings, whatever the subject under discussion and to the wild despair of all chairmen, the irrepressible Harragan lifted a solitary voice and hammered in the idea: in case of strikes do not come out but stay in; do not leave the factories, but keep them; if anybody is to be locked out, thrown on the streets, let it be the capitalist, who has long enough enjoyed everything, not the worker.

Wise people shook their heads and Trades Union Congresses are not yet endorsing such methods, but the whole of the workers of the flourishing metal trades of Italy acted literally upon these lines; the new departure has been made, and whether the present conflict will be patched up once more or lead to further developments, the new method has come to stay and will from now on be practised and perfected in Labour struggles all over the globe. The balance is shifted; the holding of the means of production need no longer be a decisive factor in favour of Capitalism, it can be an equally decisive factor on the side of Labour—if the workers only wish it.

In these circumstances it will be well to take notice of some very thoughtful articles, signed "h.," in *Umanità Nova*, the Anarchist daily of Milan, in which the author discusses this struggle and its possibilities, and maps out the means of consolidating and extending this action.

The struggle of the F.I.O.M. (Italian Metal Workers' Federation) began by "obstructionism" (slow work), and to prevent a general lock-out the factories were occupied, by surprise in the first instances, and work continued. Syndicalists are confronted by an ex-Syndicalist, a once famous exponent of Syndicalism, Arturo Labriola, who is now Giolitti's and the capitalists' Minister of Labour; he plays a waiting game, and the occupation of the factories took place without serious incidents.

What else could be done against it? The solidarity of the workers is appealed to, always ready in Italy for local general strikes, if a single strike is brutally interfered with. So in this case, if the local iron-works, etc., were attacked, to dislodge the workers, the other local factories would be occupied, making it impossible for the police and military to storm and conquer them all, and this would extend to other districts, to the whole country. There would be no unarmed crowds in public thoroughfares, the habitual victims of massacres, but workers on their defence behind the walls of ever so many factory strongholds. Then the employers must give way or the final struggle would really have come.

As to the highly skilled technical staff of the establishments in question, they were considered exclusively as useful and necessary factors of production, and the workers would guarantee to abide by their technical advice and instructions, doing proper work as they know how to do when not working for the capitalists but for themselves and the whole working community.

The great problems confronting the new movement were the supply of fresh raw materials, the disposal of the new products, and the payment of the workers during this period of revolutionary transition.

The factories of a locality would take an inventory of their stores

and help each other (which was already done at Turin). Great supplies still kept in the ports would be obtained by the co-operation of the sailors and port workers; those of Genoa, Venice, Trieste, Spezia, Leghorn, Ancona, Naples, Tarent, are specially appealed to. The Government must be forced to supply the large stores of raw materials accumulated during the war, just as at that time they supplied such materials to the capitalist industries. There would be no difficulty in disposing of the new goods produced, as products were scarce and so many customers were waiting.

These products would be distributed by special agencies in connection with the co-operative societies, agricultural associations, etc.; they would be specially welcome for the improvement of agricultural production. Other goods, work for railways, electrical machinery, etc., were essential to economic life, and had to be obtained from the metal workers.

But there was also Russia, anxious to satisfy her immense need of machinery and tools, in friendly relations now with Italy and ready to pay in gold. Any quantity of goods could be supplied, entrusted to the care of the railway, dock, and marine workers, who would protect this supply just as they stopped the transport of war material destined for the war against Russia.

Thus, if the occupation of the factories was continued, there was an excellent prospect before them; only the obstacles must be foreseen and overcome by improving and extending the movement from day to day.

Whether these ideas will be acted upon remains to be seen. In Italy, as elsewhere, the Labour movement is permeated by reformists who let slip through their fingers one revolutionary situation after the other. Will this unique occasion also be lost? (Thus far is a very brief summary of "h.'s" articles.)

Whatever the result may be, the example is henceforth given and the right direction for Labour's efforts is found. No new Governments, no isolation, but solidarity and always more solidarity. No monopoly is created by such occupations, because the dependence of the new occupiers upon all other trades who will supply materials and commodities to them and take their products off their hands, this immense interdependence of men everywhere, becomes at once visible and must be acted upon—or there is isolation and failure.

This is real direct action on the good old lines, and not that cross-breed between Parliamentarism and military rule which has so many fascinations for some.

September 10.

N.

Since we received the above article the movement has collapsed for the time being. On September 10 a meeting was held in Milan of all the leaders of the General Confederation of Labour, and after a stormy session lasting about thirty-two hours a vote was taken for revolution or negotiation, and a majority decided in favour of negotiation. On September 15 Giolitti called a meeting of representatives of the factory owners and of the workers. As a result a decree was published in which the right of workers to participate in the financial and economic affairs of all factories in Italy, and the creation of factory councils on these lines, was decreed. The ways and means of the application of this principle are to be settled by Parliament during the first eight days of its opening. We may be sure that the owners and Giolitti will do all in their power to whittle away the influence of the Workers' Councils as much as possible. The metal workers have gained an immediate increase of four lire a day, but no back pay for the days the factories were occupied. Land seizures on a large scale by the peasants have taken place in Southern Italy and Sicily, so the example of the metal workers has not been entirely lost. They have made a big step forward, and we hope next time they will not allow their leaders to prevent them from working out their experiment to its logical conclusion. But although the seizure of the factories by the metal workers points the line of action for the future, it could be successful only if followed by all other workers, including the land workers.

ANARCHISM AND BOLSHEVISM.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—In the September issue of FREEDOM Mr. Cooper has a lot to say about "abstractions." At any rate, Capitalism and its attendants, want, misery, and degradation, are not abstractions but grim realities, as every working man knows only too well. The point at issue between Mr. Cooper and the Communists is whether we are to submit to these things until the awakened consciousness of Mr. Winston Churchill, Lord Leverhulme, and the rest of the cannibal crew causes them to voluntarily relinquish their power, or whether we are to destroy the tyrants by their own weapon, *i.e.*, force.

If the latter, then Proletarian Dictatorship is a necessity in order to prevent a murderous revenge from the dispossessed exploiters. If the former, we have to continue day after day, year after year, the same monotonous round of toil, piling up wealth which we do not enjoy, in return for a bare existence. This doctrine, I think, would be more acceptable to the readers of the *Morning Post* than to those who follow Bakunin and Malatesta.—Yours fraternally,

W. WINTER.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Spain.

Apparently the social war is being waged more implacably than ever. *Le Reveil* (Geneva) devoted two columns to a concise summary of recent bloody conflicts. In Saragossa, for example, the electricians having gone on strike, the mayor sent an architect, an engineer and an assistant to do certain repairs on one of the streets. A workingman promptly shot and killed all three. Then came the question of their burial. The gravediggers, the firemen and other municipal employees refused to assist, and the authorities had to get help from charitable institutions. The account states that the victims had the burial service read over them by priests carrying a taper in one hand and a revolver in the other.

In Valencia the killing of Maestre Laborde, formerly Governor of Barcelona, has been the signal for wholesale arrests, suppression of the press, and closing of Syndicalist locals. *Solidaridad Obrera* was reported as having been suspended officially, but we have received copies dated September 17 and 24. In Barcelona the building employers decided to dismiss twenty per cent. of their working forces, and it is charged that the Syndicalist element has been marked for vengeance. Arrests at Denia have been responded to by a general strike, in which the peasants are said to be co-operating. *Espana Nueva* publishes a manifesto issued by the Confederation of Labour as a protest against the high-handed course pursued by the authorities, who have suspended trial by jury in Barcelona and Valencia, imprisoned thousands of workers, and deported three hundred Anarchists and Syndicalists.

In *Solidaridad Obrera* Teocrito criticises severely those who speak of Syndicalism and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat as if they were identical. "Let us have done," he says, "with allowing ourselves to be seduced by sonorous words. The Dictatorship of the Proletariat does not exist anywhere and cannot exist." What they are applauding in Russia is "absolute domination by a political party, more or less revolutionary, with all the formalities and attributes of a Government." He protests against the course pursued by "many Spanish comrades who persist in confounding as one these two opposites." One may diverge here, perhaps, to point out that similar protests come from Italy. *Le Reveil* is specially bitter over the course pursued recently by the Parliamentary Socialists, and declares that, "from the candidates for Dictatorship over the Italian proletariat nothing is to be hoped, although they have been duly anointed by Lenin himself." Malatesta writes strongly in a similar view, saying that authoritarian ideas have acquired recently so powerful a grip on those who call themselves Communists that one might well suppose that the words Communism and Anarchism represented two opposed tendencies, programmes and parties.

Mexico.

Here there is, as always, much activity, but news, like the activity itself, is terribly confused. *Gale's* considers the revolution which cost Carranza his life and made Obregon President a long step forward, as evidencing "the unfolding class-consciousness of the Mexican masses." Its editor was formerly quite an admirer of Carranza, but appears now to expect much from Obregon. He considers Obregon's sympathies "much more with the masses than with their exploiters," and thinks the opposition of United States capitalists may drive him from Liberalism to Communism. We have little confidence in this, but note with satisfaction that the peons are clamouring more loudly than ever for the restoration of their lands. Obregon made restoration the basis of his campaign. So did Carranza, and broke his promises. However, it is evident that there is much stir in the Labour world, and we hope the Mexicans will do their own thinking for themselves instead of being unduly influenced by the United States. The American Federation of Labour, which well-informed revolutionists find it difficult to admire, is active in Mexico, and under its protecting wing the Pan-American Federation of Labour will hold its third annual congress in Mexico City next January. The I.W.W., which is sworn enemy to the Federation, is also urging a vigorous propaganda; and its members, alike by their revolutionary instincts and by their own rough experiences, should be far better equipped for work among the peons than are the conservative respectabilities of the American Federation. They seem, however, to have swung back to Karl Marxism, and, if *Gale's* is to be trusted, are looking largely to political action. What seems certain is that the revolution which drove Diaz into exile set forces in motion which have plucked the peon out of his helpless isolation and given him, within twelve to fifteen years, an education that, under ordinary conditions, would have spread itself over centuries. We learn with deep regret, from private correspondence, that Ricardo Magon, who, more than any other single man, set the avalanche in motion, is in most precarious health and in danger of becoming blind. His latest sentence, imposed in the United States, was for life. His no less devoted and energetic brother, Enrique, should have been released last month from the Leavenworth Penitentiary. He and Ricardo were hounded out of Mexico by Diaz, fourteen years ago. Seven of those years have been spent in United States prisons, the various sentences passed on the two brothers being invariably on account of their activity as revolutionary agitators. That American plutocracy intends to conquer and

absorb Mexico, if it can, is beyond dispute. It stands towards Mexico as international capitalism stands toward revolutionary Russia, and the evolution of the Mexican movement is affected profoundly by this ever-present threat.

Spanish Anarchists and Dictatorship.

Our comrade V. Garcia writes:—"As the comrades in Spain believe me to be the author of the notes on Spain in FREEDOM, allow me to say that I am not in agreement with the one published in your September issue, the writer of which cannot know the Spanish Anarchist movement. The Communist Party was organised at the end of 1919, and has nothing to do with the Anarchists. All Anarchists, without exception, have declared themselves against Dictatorship, and *El Productor*, of Seville (which is not the same as was published thirty years ago in Barcelona), of which I have just received No. 24, has published whole numbers combatting Dictatorship, and so violently that I had to write and say, that although we do not agree with the Bolshevik regime, yet while they are attacked by the international reaction our duty is not to help this reaction."

[The comrade who wrote the note on Spain last month gained his information from *Les Temps Nouveaux* of August 15, in which the writer, Laurent-Casas, says the Anarchists are entering the new Communist Party "en masse." We are pleased to note our comrade's contradiction, but must say that there seems to be a great mistake somewhere.—ED. FREEDOM.]

WANTED—A TELESCOPE.

As prefatory to a subject far more important, I do not understand Mr. Sydney Cooper's remark about "the organisation which 'Senex' wishes to build up." I cannot have written anything justifying that remark; for I have a horror of all this organisation, as robbing men of their natural initiative, concentrating in power and leading inevitably to dictatorship. My antipathy to Socialism is based on that.

Neither do I understand how any one can accuse me of treating the peasant as an abstraction. Before a movement still hypnotised, as I think, by phrases, I pose the peasant as a concrete reality; as the man who feeds the talkers; as the one man who is based on the substantial, and, therefore, is weathering the storm. The peasant has dictated France's policy towards Russia; on him Russia's cities and armies depend. If he declines to work the land or to dispose of what he raises from it, cities and armies starve. His power, therefore, far from being an abstraction, is very real.

Let me add, for it is by no means so obvious, that negatively the peasant dictates Great Britain's policies. As we have exterminated the small occupier, we are dependent on others for our food supplies and are forced into an Imperialism which aims at the conquest of markets, to save us from starvation. The extirpation of our peasantry has made our economic situation entirely different from that of other nations.

There are, as I see it, two distinct classes of power, political and economic. The former, which forces the masses into courses dictated by the governors, is essentially military and rests on coercion. The latter, which produces the things needed by mankind, is essentially industrial, and can flourish only under freedom. I regard militarism, and all policies tainted by militarism, as survivals of a barbarous past, to be thrown on the scrap heap at the earliest moment possible. It is quite clear to me that the future belongs to voluntary industrialism.

For years I interested myself greatly in the Mexican Revolution, and the song I sang incessantly was this: "These peons do not want fine speeches. They do not want the One Big Union or the vote, or any of those labyrinthine organisations in which an absurdly artificial civilisation has lost itself. What they want is access to the land; and when they have that they will be independent and able, of their own vital force, to go ahead." I say that still of Mexico. I say it of every country. I say it most emphatically of this island.

Neither Socialism nor Anarchism has worked out as yet, in my opinion, a land programme that meets the facts; that will put the products of the soil, which varies greatly in value, at the free, equal, and equitable disposition of Industry and make exploitation no longer possible. Our heads are still in the clouds and we are still trying to feed Labour—employed, unemployed, and misemployed—on fine speeches and senseless organisations. They are senseless because they dodge the basic fact that all wealth comes from the soil, and propose, by some hocus-pocus, to enable us to lift ourselves by our boot-straps and make something out of nothing.

Some day, as I hope, the masses will make a great discovery. Some day, as I believe, they will raise a united shout: "Why, all wealth, everything, comes from labour applied to land!" Then—universal freedom. Then—good-bye, Capitalism. Then—good-bye, Imperialism and the British Empire, now wading to the bridle-bits in blood.

Is it a dream? No; it is a discovery. Galileo discovered, through his telescope, that the earth did move; and we, in our turn, discover that all Labour is the mere moving of this earth beneath our feet.

SENEX.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BOLSHEVISM IN PRACTICE.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR EDITOR,—In the September issue of FREEDOM you print a leading article entitled "Bolshevism in Practice." As an Anarchist Communist, I work for the destruction of the propertied system, and I want as keenly as anybody to see the dawn of a better day for Humanity. I find, however, that I cannot agree with some of the points raised in the above-mentioned article. You say you are able to form a tolerably clear idea as to the conditions now prevailing in Russia, but a moment later you almost contradict yourself by stating that, owing to the report having been carefully prepared so that all sections of the Delegation could agree to it, no definite opinions were expressed. Further, it is surprising that any Anarchist should attach so much importance to the report of a *Labour Delegation!* the last people on earth to be expected to speak truthfully about Soviet Russia with the exception, perhaps, of the British Government itself.

You speak of the centralisation and Governmental control of industry, and state that the actual workers are in a minority on all industrial committees; but you seem to completely ignore the fact that all delegates are elected by the workers and are liable to be withdrawn and replaced at any time. I fail to see how it would be possible for the Workers' Councils to be undermined and superseded by new committees against the people's wish, under these circumstances.

You also say that workers who desert to the country are brought back by soldiers from the villages; but to the contrary I understand that land work is being encouraged by the Soviets, and especially where co-operative farming is being introduced. Seeds, machinery, technical advice, and especially education are supplied to land workers ("Soviets," by Joseph King). In short, there is ample encouragement for workers to quit the towns and settle in the country.

The Labour Delegation and Mr. Russell, you say, state that there is neither freedom of speech nor freedom of press. That, again, I consider to be untrue. I have been a constant reader of the *Workers' Dreadnought* and remember reading therein some time ago that there is both freedom of speech and freedom of press, and that the reactionaries, through their press, denounce the Soviet Government on such a scale as no paper in England ever attempted to denounce a capitalist Government. In Russia there is political freedom, as anyone who has read the reports of the elections to the Constituent Assemblies would know.

In my opinion, all the talk about nine men who meet daily having practically all power is only so much piffle. Is it not plain that if this were so the peasants before now would have rebelled, and that the blockade, the intervention, and the war waged by the Allied Governments and Poland would have sufficed to overthrow the Soviet? The fact that the Soviet still survives, in face of all setbacks, all evils, all treachery, and all slander, is sufficient proof to me that for some time to come the people of Russia have the kind of government they desire. If nine men had so much power, Koltchak himself could have destroyed the Soviets. Any particular individuals exercising power in Russia are carrying out the wishes of the people. In Russia there is a Dictatorship and a Dictatorship of the Proletariat. If the Communist Party rules the country, it is because the majority of the people are Communists. If that were not so, the fight against the capitalist Governments of the world would have been given up long ago. If it were true, as you state, that Lenin and his comrades are wielding a greater power in a more despotic manner than the tyrant they pulled down, again I repeat there would be no Soviet in Russia to day.

You state that very little local initiative is allowed the people in carrying on their own affairs; but when one remembers that the Soviet form of Government is built up from the bottom, whereas the Parliamentary form starts at the top, it is clear that initiative is encouraged in Russia and not hindered as in England.

If Anarchism is ultimately to triumph (as undoubtedly it must), there must be a transition period which will exist until all traces of Capitalism have been destroyed. Then, and only then, will the people of the whole world abolish all forms of government. But humanity can no more step from the bonds of Capitalism into the heart of Anarchism than could primitive man bound in one gigantic jump from cannibalism to what we now know as "modern civilisation."

In conclusion, do you not think that in your bitter and, in my opinion, greatly exaggerated denunciation of Bolshevism in Russia you are rather retarding Humanity's progress towards Anarchism than helping it?—Yours in the cause for Freedom,

MINNIE BIRCH.

[Our comrade cannot be on both sides of a fence at one and the same time, but her letter is certainly a good attempt at the impossible. She says: "In Russia there is political freedom." If that is so, then there is no Dictatorship. In another part she says: "In Russia there is a Dictatorship." Then there can be no political freedom, for the two are absolutely incompatible. We admit that there is a Dictatorship in Russia, and in last month's article we pointed out that, from facts supplied by the Labour Delegation and Bertrand Russell, the Dictatorship was working as all Dictatorships are supposed to work—that is, with absolute power over the community, suppression of free speech

and free press, and compulsory service, military and industrial. Miss Birch denies that this is so, but all these things have been admitted and justified in the Bolshevik papers in this country, and should be known to propagandists like herself. The Labour Delegation Report was signed by Robert Williams, a confirmed Bolshevik. It was a statement of facts on which all members of the Delegation were in agreement; but they differed widely as to the necessity of some of the measures taken by the Bolsheviks, and so the Delegation expressed no opinion as a body. But the Report confirms statements made by other visitors to Russia. Miss Birch says that certain things cannot be, because the workers elect the delegates. Let our comrade go to any gathering of delegates—Trade Union, Liberal, Socialist, even Communist—and she will see the leaders on the platform juggle with the audience until they will vote for almost anything, even for their own enslavement. She says: "If the Communist Party rules the country, it is because the majority of the people are Communists." It may be because the Communist Party hold the rifles. But even the Communist Party do not claim more than about 600,000 convinced adherents in Russia. "The Soviet Government is built up from the bottom." The leaders of the Bolsheviks formed a Government at the time of the Revolution, and then drafted a Constitution and issued decrees which safeguarded their position. In a Report by L. Kameneff to the Seventh All-Russian Congress of Soviets (published in Moscow, 1920) we read: "In the intervals between congresses the chief organ of the Soviet apparatus, the supreme authority in Soviet Russia, is the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. It enjoys a number of rights and privileges which make it during the intervals between congresses actually responsible for the fate of Soviet Russia. However, until the present time, during the two years of our life, which can justly be called a fighting life, the work and the rights of the Central Executive Committee itself have not yet been regulated. The Constitution does not provide either the date, the manner, nor upon whose initiative or demand the Cen. Ex. Com. is to be convened." Yet this irregular body is the "supreme authority" in Russia. What is the use of talking about electing delegates in a situation like that? We would advise our comrade to read some Bolshevik literature. In answer to her question in the last paragraph, we think Humanity's progress to Anarchism will be seriously retarded if the people spend their energy in building up Dictatorships, which can only lead to disillusion and disappointment. Anarchism does not lay along that road.—ED. FREEDOM.]

ANARCHISTS AND DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—Believing the following to be a statement of the attitude taken up by many Anarchists towards a Proletarian Dictatorship, I send it you in the hope that you will find space in the columns of FREEDOM for a thorough discussion of the "pros and cons" of a temporary alliance with the Communist Party (British Section of the Third International).—Yours fraternally,

BERT PLATTIN.

"That the Proletarian Dictatorship is essential during the Crisis of the Social Revolution."

The lesson taught us by Revolutionary Russia is this,—that when the Social Revolution is precipitated in any country keen and convinced revolutionaries, sure of their aim and held together no less by a common aim than by mutual fidelity, must be ready to play the role of a strong Government. Such men as are needed at such a time can never be constitutionally elected, but must be placed and displaced by the workers' trade, industrial, and political councils, which must be ready or must immediately come into being to expropriate the means of life, to regulate distribution and production, and to organise a Proletarian Guard or Red Army. This we see is essential to safeguard the Revolution from counter-revolution.

But as all danger from reaction disappears, all forms of dictatorship must go likewise. Then must Anarchists insist with no uncertain voice that all association and co-operation must be free; we must then become the most active and uncompromising opponents of the dictatorship called into being by the exigencies of the revolutionary crisis.

Could the masses, immediately the power of the capitalist State has collapsed, become convinced Anarchists, then would the Revolution be safeguarded straight away. But who would expect such a miracle to happen? History and common sense tell us that the masses who in desperation have at last risen against their rulers would, in the absence of a strong lead by the revolutionaries, fall a prey to the counter-revolutionaries. Thus, detestable as is the Dictatorship to those whose goal is Anarchist Communism, still in the momentous days of the revolutionary crisis every man and woman amongst us who desires the triumph of the proletariat over the capitalist-military dictatorship, whether Anarchist or Egoist, Libertarian or Authoritarian, will beware of taking any action likely to endanger that triumph. And, once the Revolution has paralysed capitalist power, I would ask my Anarchist comrades,—Is it not worth while temporarily agreeing to forego immediate and fullest liberty while the fate of the Revolution lies in the balance? Would you have capitalist militarism remaining in power in Russia or any other country until such time as sufficient Anarchists have developed to overthrow it? What would International Capitalism be doing with Russia but for her Red Army? One has only to ask

that question to see how necessary its organisation has been; and if necessary for Russia, how can one object on principle to a Red Army in any other country?

Those of us who have some conception of the hell of evil, misery, and degradation that Capitalist Dictatorship is causing in the world to-day cannot surely hesitate at the choice between a Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the continued Dictatorship of Capitalism pending the readiness of the world for the full liberty of Anarchist Communism. The utter rout of King Capital and the disappearance of Mammon worship from the proletarian mind will take us a very long way on the road to liberty for all; but whilst on the road the Anarchist will find that he cannot have that fullest liberty while the war with Capitalism and its knaves and dupes is being waged; he must be prepared to make alliances with the less far-seeing revolutionary proletariat who have brought about the overthrow of capitalist power, but whose complete triumph is still endangered by reaction. When the masses are ready to expropriate the land and factories, etc., shall we refuse to act with them because they are not out to establish at once our ideal of free Communism? Let us pull down by every means at our disposal Capitalist Dictatorship; that at any rate will be clearing the ground for the eternal struggle between Libertarians and Authoritarians.

The abstention of Anarchists from the Workers' Councils is as foolish as has been the abstention of many Anarchists from Trade Unions. Anarchists should be in them, weaning them away from their reliance on authority to the responsibility of individual freedom and initiative, not withdrawing and resigning them into the hands of conservatives and reactionaries; they are working-class weapons that we must fashion to our use, not leave them to be used against us by knaves and noodles.

B. P.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—The question, Should Anarchists support a Dictatorship? is receiving much consideration at the present time, and it appears that there is much diversity of opinion amongst Anarchists as to its answer.

The chief arguments for support seem to be, that in these days of revolution a strong Government is necessary to lead us in the expropriation of the means of life, also to safeguard us from counter-revolution; and as the danger of reaction disappears, so will the true revolutionaries become opponents to the temporarily constructed Proletarian Dictatorship. In order to discuss this to advantage I think it necessary to consider our first principles and work from that as a basis. This brings us to the question, what is an Anarchist? An Anarchist is first of all a libertarian; all his actions should be prompted by the spirit of liberty, allowing each to work out his own salvation in his own way. He denies any man the right to govern, neither does he himself wish to govern. He believes that progress is only reached through each undertaking his or her responsibility to think, to know, to act according to their own reason, and so strike blow upon blow at the superstition of authority and its godhead, the State.

If you do not want wage-slavery, refuse to be a wage-slave. If you seek the co-operation of your fellows, have only those who come freely. Form your own communes, and the very breath of freedom will give more power to your elbow.

If, on the other hand, you go to work forming your Dictatorship, you will be handing your power to some of your fellows (selected it matters not how); place them on a pedestal, and they immediately become your enemy. Shelley says: "Power, like a desolating pestilence, pollutes whate'er it touches." Why don't our friends who desire a dictatorship set out to capture Parliament? They no longer trust that institution. Surely Government by any other name will smell as vile, if such be as tyrannical and equally opposed to freedom. Surely it is folly for Anarchists to support authority in the shape of a Proletarian Dictatorship, and then when the weapon has been forged anew to cry out against it directly we feel the pinch of the evils of conscription, the denial of freedom of speech and press, and other suppressions that result from such dictatorship.

Let us be revolutionists in our desire for change, go on with our propaganda, and prevent international wars with the power we hold, letting such mass action be free and spontaneous.

Gain free access to the soil through our communes, and on the principle that "the man who grows the potato has Nature's right to eat it." But through all our actions carry the spirit of freedom with us, remembering freedom knows no dictatorship. I do not mean the freedom to allow a group of men to own the land at the expense of the rest of the community; but the freedom to allow your neighbour to live and express himself without such ownership. Ownership and freedom have nothing in common. I think, when turning to our first principles, they will lead us to fight not only against Capitalism, Militarism, and Government, but also against Proletarian Dictatorship.—Yours fraternally,

STANLEY OXLEY.

When is the Bartholdi statue to be pulled down!—G. Bernard Shaw. "G. B. S." is referring sarcastically to the statue of Liberty at the entrance to New York Harbour. Surely, statues are usually erected to the dead!

Push the sale of "Freedom."

THE CRY OF THE PEOPLE.

By JOHN G. NEIHARDT, *Western Poet and Novelist.*

Tremble before your chattels,
Lords of the scheme of things!
Fighters of all earth's battles,
Ours is the might of kings!
Guided by seers and sages,
The world's heart-beat for a drum,
Snapping the chains of ages,
Out of the night we come!

Lend us no ear that pities!
Offer no almoner's hand!
Alms for the builders of cities!
When will you understand?
Down with your pride of birth
And your golden gods of trade!
A man is worth to his mother, Earth,
All that a man has made!

We are the workers and makers!
We are no longer dumb!
Tremble, O Shirkers and Takers!
Sweeping the earth—we come!
Ranked in the world-wide dawn,
Marching into the day!
*The night is gone and the sword is drawn
And the scabbard is thrown away!!*

—Anarchist Soviet Bulletin.

Death of Neno Vasco.

It is with great regret that we hear of the death of one of the best known of Portuguese comrades, Neno Vasco, who died near Oporto on September 24, at the early age of 41. His real name was Nazianzo, but he had used the pen-name of "Neno Vasco" for so long that only a few comrades knew him by any other. Originally trained as a lawyer, he practised very little after gaining his degree, but soon emigrated to Brazil, where he continued his study of various sciences for his own education, at the same time giving lessons to others. He collaborated in the publication of Anarchist papers in the Spanish and Portuguese languages, and also formed a strong group of negro Anarchists. He returned to Portugal in 1910, and continued to write for the Portuguese Anarchist papers as well as for those in Brazil. Neno Vasco fought strenuously against those who supported the war, and also against the Bolshevik tendencies in the Portuguese movement, being a consistent opponent of Dictatorship.

Although Neno Vasco's writings have appeared in many papers and magazines, few of them have appeared in book form. At the time of his death he was writing a book on "Anarchism and Syndicalism," which he left unfinished.

At his funeral the red flags of Portuguese Communists were unfurled, and the daily paper *A Batalha*, to which he was a constant contributor, dedicated a special number to his memory.

For Organised Effort.

We have received a letter from *Un*, a journal of Free Individualism, formerly *La Mée*, of Paris, which notifies us that they are making a serious effort to bring into direct communication with one another those who hold free Individualist opinions and favour free, as opposed to authoritarian, co-operation. As the letter remarks, "Individualism does not mean isolation," and unity of action for the spread of the ideas we hold in common is indispensable. Both because our French comrades are making in every issue of their paper a magnificent attack on the authoritarian State—which is the ground common to all Anarchists—and because we recognise that our own movement is suffering greatly from the isolation and scattering of its forces, we welcome this effort and urge all friends to assist it to the utmost. Here in England an immense amount of talent, honest, enthusiastic, and most sympathetic toward the tendencies for which we stand, is lying round, loose and inactive, eager enough to affiliate with others, but ignorant of how to begin. We have many excellent writers and speakers who are compelled at present to wage a single-handed crusade, making their own openings and securing their own audiences as best they can. The solitary individual always works at a great disadvantage, and even a little systematised effort, a little co-operation in the exchange of ideas and information, would further our propaganda work enormously. A correspondence bureau might be started, lists of papers willing to receive articles might be compiled, arrangements for supplying speakers made, and so forth. We trust our readers will take this up, and write to us and to M. Marcel Sauvage, 3 Rue Berthollet, Paris, to whom also they can write in English.

WANTED—£100!

Once again we appeal to our readers to help us in the work of producing FREEDOM. Last month and this month it consists of eight pages, and we hope the response to our appeal will be generous enough to allow us to maintain the paper at that size. Expenses are rising steadily, and as it would be unwise to raise the price of FREEDOM, we trust to the generosity of our most sympathetic readers.

We also have in hand the manuscript of a pamphlet by our late comrade, George Barrett, entitled "Objections to Anarchism." As most of our readers know, he was a brilliant propagandist, both with voice and pen, his death being a great loss to the Anarchist movement. As a speaker in all parts of the country, questions were put to him again and again which he always answered in his usual logical and convincing manner. Whilst he was lying ill he selected those questions and objections to Anarchism which he considered most important and wrote out the answers. There are twenty-four questions altogether, and he answers each one in turn—question and answer. It is a really splendid piece of propaganda, and we have undertaken to have it printed at once, with the assistance of our Bristol comrades, who intend to publish the works of George Barrett in book form, as soon as funds permit. The pamphlet will be about 40 pages, and will be an expensive job.

At the same time we have decided to reprint "The State: Its Historic Role," by Peter Kropotkin; and "Anarchy," by Malatesta. Both these pamphlets are constantly asked for, and will have a ready sale. The time is ripe for steady and persistent Anarchist propaganda, and the written word is the most effective method.

We therefore appeal to every one of our readers, both in this country and abroad, to send us promptly whatever they can possibly spare to help us in this work. We know times are hard, we know many are out of work; but it is for that very reason that the propaganda should not be allowed to flag.

Our appeal last autumn brought a splendid response. This one, we hope, will be even more successful. Cheques, money orders, and postal orders should be made payable to Freedom Press. Do not forget—we want £100!

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- Pax Economica.* By Henri Lambert. 75 cents post-free.—*The False Peace.* By Henri Lambert.—*True Free Trade.* By Henry George. Boston (Mass): International Free Trade League.
- Revolution in Russia and Australia.* By R. S. Ross. 1s. Melbourne: "Ross's," 184 Exhibition Street.
- A History of Trades Councils (1860-1875).* By Cicely Richards. London: Labour Research Department, 34 Eccleston Square, S.W.1.
- Facts about the Coal Dispute.* 2d. London: Triple Industrial Alliance, 8 St. Martin's Place, W.C.2.
- What is the Shop Stewards' Movement?* By Tom Walsh. 3d. London: National Federation of Shop Stewards, 8 Dorset Street, E.C.4.
- The Capitalist Press.* 2d. I.L.P. Information Committee, 5 York Buildings, W.C.2.
- The Case against J. T. Brownlie.* 2d. London: London Vigilance Committee of the A.E.U., 10 Tudor Street, E.C.4.
- The Danger of the League of Nations.* By George Nicholson. London: Dorset Publishing Company, 6 Dorset Street, E.C.4.
- Radiant Motherhood: A Book for those who are Creating the Future.* By Marie Carmichael Stopes. 6s. net. London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 24 Bedford Street, W.C.2.

With this issue of "Freedom" is presented a complete List of Books and Pamphlets in stock.

CASH RECEIVED (not otherwise acknowledged).

(September 8 to October 7.)

- "FREEDOM" SUBSCRIPTIONS.—G. Robertson, F. Wells, K. M. Y., H. Combes, E. C. Ballard, S. Van den Berg, J. Boquet, A. Luca, J. Grand-Jean, H. Freedman, M. Walt, E. P. Totten, F. Mucci, T. H., J. E. Matthews, K. K., A. Rumbold, T. H. P., W. H. Brown.
- "FREEDOM" GUARANTEE FUND.—T. S. 5s., Gateshead Sympathisers £1, E. R. £2, J. Tamlyn 2s., H. Combes 7s. 6d., R. Paddie 2s., H. Freedman 5s. 6d., F. Mucci 5s., F. Goulding 1s. 6d., J. S. 1s. 6d., W. H. Brown 3s.

NOTICES.

WHITECHAPEL.—Clothing Workers Industrial Union No. 9 hold Open-Air Meetings every Sunday, 11.45 a.m., and Monday at 8 p.m., at the corner of Fulbourne Street and Whitechapel Road, E. Speakers welcome. Hon. Secretary, A. Gilbert, 35 Cephass Street, Mile End, E.1.

CARDIFF.—Our comrade A. BANKS, 1 Carmarthen Street, Market Road, Canton, Cardiff, stocks FREEDOM and all Anarchist publications, and is willing to supply groups and branches with advanced literature of all kinds. Comrades calling will be welcomed.

LEEDS.—G. FROST, 31 Windsor Street, York Road, stocks FREEDOM and all other Anarchist publications, and would be pleased to see comrades.

Printed & Published by the Freedom Press, 127 Ossulston Street, London, N.W. 1.