

# FREEDOM

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST SOCIALISM.

VOL. 1.—No. 6.

MARCH, 1887.

MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

## NOTES.

"THE government of Ireland by England is the worst government in the world," said Sir William Harcourt from his place in Parliament. Having taken part in it himself, he ought to know; but the rulers of mankind press each other hard in the race for infamy, and we should be inclined to lay odds on a dead heat between Dublin Castle and the Russian Autocracy.

\* \* \*

In any case, the Archbishop of Cashel's suggestion is worthy the attention of all honest men and rebels. Why pay taxes? "We supply a stick to beat ourselves with; we put a whip into the hands of men who use it to lash and lacerate us. This is suicidal."

\* \* \*

His Reverence has hit the nail on the head, and his words should go right home to the wage-workers of every land; for each and all they pay taxes with the sweat of their brow to a government which only exists to force them to be slaves, by maintaining the monopoly of property.

\* \* \*

The Lanarkshire miners have had some experience of this fact. The brave fellows struck against slow starvation on an uncertain 12s. to 15s. a week, and when the masters refused a rise, held out still, and began to supply their needs from the stores of food in the village shops, for their children were crying for bread. Whereupon masters and property-holders summoned the hired defenders of our free and enlightened British institutions, who arrested 57 miners, and forced the rest back to work on the employers' terms.

\* \* \*

Mining does not pay, groan the coal-owners; and besides refusing a rise on starvation wages in Scotland, they are trying to screw down starvation wages in England. There is some useful information on the causes of this in a recent tract on 'Mining Rents,' by J. M. Davidson, (Modern Press, 1d.). In Lanark one "ducal highwayman preys on the mining industry of the district to the extent of £114,000 per annum" in royalties. The man who does nothing at all gets 9d. to 1s. 6d. on each ton of coal; the man who hews it gets at the outside 1s. per ton; and the capitalist grabs as much of the rest of the value as he can.

\* \* \*

Mr. Davidson, in common with some British miners, who let their masters lead them by the nose, thinks the assumption of mining royalties by the State would remedy this crying injustice. But the horrible misery revealed by last year's riots in France and Belgium, teach us what such legislation means for the workers. It puts temporarily higher profits into the capitalist's pockets and leaves the miners starving as before.

\* \* \*

There is but one way of salvation. These trifling disputes for a shilling a week more or less are not worth the suffering they cause. Deliverance can come neither from wage strikes nor legislation. The miners themselves must send flying the whole unclean brood of harpies that batten upon their life energy. They must rid themselves once for all of landlord and capitalist alike, and take mines and machinery into their own hands, if they would be free men.

\* \* \*

When a man runs short before pay-day and asks to be paid what he has earned up to date, employers very commonly charge him a penny in the shilling interest. The law is going to take the matter in hand for the miners. We shall see if it will be more successful in stopping this usury than in relieving shop assistants and keeping factories in decent condition. Not while the masters have the whip and reins in their hands. And when they have been forced to drop them, the law will not be needed.

\* \* \*

Since Sir Charles Warren's efforts at reorganisation, the English police authorities have surpassed themselves. Not content with being conspicuous by their absence from the stone-throwing in Clerkenwell, or with deliberately beguiling a poor widow into the crime of telling fortunes for sixpence, they have been marching off comrade Allman to prison for a month for "creating an obstruction" in an out of the way slum where a cart does not pass on a Sunday once in six months. But of course any pretext is good enough to run in a Socialist.

## ANOTHER LITTLE WAR.

For some years the eyes of Italian capitalists and speculators have been turned towards Northern Africa. It is a necessity to every nation, in which the capitalist system of producing for profit has reached a certain degree of development, to possess colonies, as markets for its shoddy and nurseries for its raw material. Therefore, of course it is the business of the government, the agent and swash-buckler of the ruling classes, to aid and abet them in the spoliation of uncivilised peoples.

Now the French Republic outdid the Italians in the scramble for Tunis; and that after the Italian speculators had already obtained land there, and also permission from the Bey to open up the country with railways. So naturally these worthy folk were grievously annoyed. But when Cardinal Massaia wrote from Abyssinia of the land there to be conquered and natives to be exploited, the Italian capitalists saw another chance. For some time Italy has rung with the cant so familiar to English ears, about carrying the blessings of civilisation to savage nations. Exploring parties were despatched; finally General Pozzolini was sent "on a mission" to King John. The old, old story we English know so well; explorers, missionaries, traders, land grabbing, exploitation, and then armies and artillery to enforce the submission of the "barbarians" to the tyranny of the whites who rob and enslave them.

The Abyssinians, however, were better prepared than is usual with a semi-savage people marked out by a great capitalist State as its victim. The rulers of Italy and Austria are allies, and Italy is therefore detested by the Tzar. Accordingly Cossack emissaries found their way into the court of King John, and Russian gold into his treasury; and the Italians, creeping stealthily towards their prey, found the suspicions of the people aroused and a nation in arms to receive them. Thus it has come about that the Massowah expedition, intended to overawe the natives, has met with determined resistance, and the Italian Ministry, who assured Parliament that there would be no fighting, have had to confess not only a battle, but a serious defeat.

"It is a noteworthy fact," writes an Italian correspondent, "that only the declared enemies of government and capitalism are able to withstand the temptation of military glory and territorial conquests." And indeed the only public protests against Italian aggression in Abyssinia have come from the circle of the Lega de' Figli vel Gavora at Naples and the Italian colony in London, all of whom are Socialists, and the majority Anarchists.

In truth the masses of the people know nothing of these little wars. They are too hopelessly ground down by the oppression of their masters at home to look with anything but stupid indifference on their crimes abroad. It is only when the workers realise their own position, and how they themselves are the slaves of those who possess land and capital, and, if they would live, must work for these men for a wage—*i.e.*, a miserable fraction of what they produce—that they wake up to the wrong and shame of hiring themselves out as cut-throats to minister still further to their masters' lust for gain and power.<sup>1</sup> A Social Revolution which shall free the working classes of Europe and America is the only hope of peace and well-being for those races which have as yet escaped the blessings of shoddy, exploitation, brandy, and vice.

## PARLIAMENTARIANISM AND REVOLT.

No intelligent British workman looks upon Parliament as a model political institution; but there is a growing opinion amongst Radicals, shared even by some Socialists, that if the working classes are to improve their condition, they must do so by means of getting working-class representatives into the House of Commons; just as the Irish have sent there a body of Home Rulers. The Parnellites are obviously paving the way for Home Rule by their parliamentary action. Why should not the parliamentary action of a labour party lead up to a fairer distribution of the fruits of labour?

Now there are two factors in the Irish question at present, and they are frequently confused.

First, there is the political question, the question of nationality. The Irish people have been conquered by the English. Like all subject

<sup>1</sup> If any one wants to know the truth about soldiering, he had better read our comrade Bateman's experiences of it, just published by the Modern Press, price 1d.

racers, they have been shamefully wronged and oppressed by their foreign masters. For hundreds of years they have been struggling to free themselves from this yoke. Eighty-seven years ago their own miserable political organisation, such as it was, was destroyed, and they were only allowed to have any voice at all in the management of their own affairs by sending representatives to the English Parliament. The Irish nation is too small and weak to resist this tyranny by force of arms, but its representatives have discovered that by clogging the wheels of the British parliamentary machine by perpetual obstruction and noisy talk they can make themselves as hateful as the Israelites of old in Egypt, so that the English Pharaoh will in the end be compelled to let them go. Their aim is to bring about the establishment of a localised National government, and so they make centralised Imperial government impossible. A Parliament is their end, and so naturally and logically they make parliamentary methods their means.

If English workmen were in a similar position; if they wanted to obtain political separation from the ruling classes; if their end were some change in the *form* of government, as was that of the early Radicals; if, in fact, they were aiming at *political* revolution, like the Home Rulers, they might well take a leaf out of the Parnellite book. But Ireland has another lesson to teach us, and one far more applicable to our situation.

There is a second factor in the Irish question of to-day, *i.e.*, its economic aspect. Who has a right to the produce of the soil of Ireland; the peasants who till it, or the landlords who do nothing? Most of these landlords are of alien lineage, but that does not touch the kernel of the matter. The Highland crofters do not find the exactions of their countryman MacCallum More easier to put up with than the Irish the exactions of a Clanricarde. In fact the ownership of land is a problem of universal interest. It is a burning question in every civilised country, whatever the political institutions; and we hear of the injustice of mining royalties, rents, and tithes, even in England, where we have "every constitutional freedom." When we recall the fact that many members of the Home Rule party are themselves landlords, we see that Home Rule cannot solve the Irish land question, any more than Mr. Gladstone's Land Bill has solved it.

The only concessions which the Irish peasantry have really obtained have been wrung out of the land grabbers by moonlighting, by armed resistance to eviction, by boycotting, by the Plan of Campaign, by voluntary associations like the National League; that is to say, by the brave spirit of insubordination which hundreds of years of tyranny have been unable to quell. Ireland is leading the van of the universal land war, and she is leading it by the only means available in an economic contest, the only means by which the masses of the people in any land and any age have successfully withstood robbery and oppression: direct, personal, open resistance.

No fundamental question of the distribution of wealth has ever been settled by legislation. The most legislation has ever done has been to sanction the arrangements come to after a hard fought battle, contested inch by inch by the Haves against the Have-nots.

Now the question for English workmen, and for the workers all over the world, like the Irish land question, is economic. It is the question, is it fair that certain persons should call themselves *owners* of capital, just as certain others call themselves *owners* of land, and in virtue of this ownership take the lion's share of the produce of other men's labour?

Is it credible for one moment that a labour party,—could one as numerous, well drilled, and devoted as the Parnellites, be placed in the House of Commons to-morrow—would be able to introduce and force through our Parliament of property holders any legislation dealing adequately with this matter? The Parnellites can effectually obstruct business and obtain their negative political end that way, but they have never succeeded in any positive measure, even such a milk and water relief act as was Parnell's. In fact one corner of their contention is that in the English Parliament they can do nothing positive for Ireland. Would any English labour party be able to carry such sweeping measures as would destroy the vested interests of land and capital owners? Hardly; so long as those vested interests remain strong and flourishing. Such legislation can only become a possibility when these vested interests are already undermined and tottering to their fall. Then perhaps law-makers might "abolish them," and looking round, like the fly on the wheel, say, "See what a dust I have raised!" In other words, a labour party inside Parliament can act only when the work has already been done outside Parliament by the masses of the people. Think of the impotence of the labour party in the German Reichstadt, and the efforts and sacrifices which might be more effectively expended, devoted by the German workers to sending them there to do nothing.

No; the working-class must solve this economic problem, as the Irish peasantry are solving it, by direct personal action, by open revolt. All honour to the Lanark miners who are setting the example.

Our masters are never tired of preaching that no good comes of such means. Let us watch what they do, rather than listen to what they say. What is the market value of Irish land? In no particular place perhaps have the peasants succeeded in finally defeating their foes, but the general result of their unconquerable resistance is that land grabbing in Ireland is ceasing to be a profitable business; they are making it the interest of their tyrants to leave them alone. Just in the same way each attempt at revolt amongst the workers may be put down, but a succession of such outbreaks will render capitalist exploitation too dangerous and too unprofitable to be worth defending.

If the workers are only bold enough in their refusal to be put off with half measures, the game is in their own hands; if they allow themselves to be deluded into the by-path of parliamentary action and moderate reform their liberation may be deferred for ever and a day.

## PROPERTY.

Are they not mine, saith the Lord, the everlasting hills?  
(Where over the fir-tree tops I glance to the valleys).  
The rich meads with brown and white cattle, and streams with weirs  
and water-mills,  
And the tender growing crops, and hollows of shining apple-blossom—  
From my mountain-terraces as from a throne beholding my lands—  
Are they not mine, where I dwell—and for my children?

How long, you, will you trail your slime over them, and your talk of rights and of property?

How long will you build you houses to hide yourselves in, and your baggage? to shut yourselves off from your brothers and sisters—and Me?

Beware! for I am the storm; I care nought for your rights of property.

In lightning and thunder, in floods and fire, I will ruin and ravage your fields;

Your first-born will I slay within your house, and I will make your riches a mockery.

Fools! that know not from day to day, from hour to hour, if ye shall live—

And yet will snatch from each other the things that I have showered among you.

For I will have none that will not open his door to all—treating others as I have treated him.

The trees that spread their boughs against the evening sky, the marble that I have prepared beforehand these millions of years in the earth; the cattle that roam over the myriad hills—they are Mine, for all my children—

If thou lay hands on them for thyself alone, thou art accursed.

The curse of property shall cling to thee;  
With burdened brow and heavy heart, weary, incapable of joy, without gaiety,

Thou shalt crawl a stranger in the land that I made for thy enjoyment.

The smallest bird on thy estate shall sing in freedom in the branches—the plough-boy shall whistle in the furrow—

But thou shalt be weary and lonely—forsaken and an alien among men:

For just inasmuch as thou hast shut thyself off from one of the least of these my children, thou hast shut thyself off from Me.

I the Lord Demos have spoken it—and the mountains are my throne.

## "THE RELIGION OF SOCIALISM."

It is pleasant and good to see eye to eye with one's friend; and this will be mostly the Anarchist-Socialist's feeling in reading these essays and addresses republished in book-form.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bax's historical and economical views; his ethics of disinterested and enthusiastic regard for the common good or weal; his religion, which confesses itself to be a pilgrim seeking after a land where "the interest of the individual will be once more identified, and this time *consciously* with the interest of the community"; his "communism, as final goal, which unites the solidarity of early society with the cosmopolitan tendency of individualism,"—all these will form matter of agreement and congratulation between readers and author.

Perhaps his warfaring against the Church Christianity and its theology or metaphysic is a trifle Bismarckian.

It evinces the man of iron and puritan exaggeration. The vigour and rigour of the Collectivist is sometimes even a trifle illogical. For instance, the ordinary man, whose intellect is not yet on fire, may find it difficult to see the identity (p. 81) of "Atheism" and "Humanism, by which is meant the recognition of social progress as our being's highest end and aim."

But all this is only by the way, and well-meaning enthusiasm gone to one side; nay, pardonable when one remembers the proverb about "two of a trade," whether metaphysical or other. Buy the book, if you have 3s. 3d. to spare, read it, lend it about. It will stir up the heart and inform the mind of lender and borrowers. The most serious error in it is where, under the head of "Unscientific Socialism," it confounds "Anarchism" with sheer atomism and formlessness. "The Anarchist desires no reorganisation"! "He is a thoroughgoing individualist"! "His goal is social dissolution"! Then a page and a

<sup>1</sup> 'The Religion of Socialism.' By E. B. Bax. London: Swan, Sonnenschein, Lowrey, and Co.

half of pious horror. Yet when Mr. Bax has let himself off, and feels able to stand and look steady and calm again, he takes one's breath away with this: The Anarchist "goal and that of the Collectivist is similar substantially." "But"! "But the Collectivist would take the sure historical highway of organisation to that Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity which the Anarchist would seek in vain to reach by the abrupt but suicidal plunge of dissolution."

Is Anarchism, then, war to the knife with history and organisation, is it anti-social and merely destructive?

Or is Mr. Bax parliamentarian and social reformer? By no means. "True Socialism recognises that force is the midwife of progress." Both Mr. Bax and the Anarchist, then, are revolutionaries; and there is not a jot of real difference between them respecting ways and means. Then as to goal or end or ideal, hear Mr. Bax himself. "The whole political and administrative system, once the great crisis of the revolution is passed, will have for its end the abolition of civilisation, and therewith *its own abolition*." The revolution over, class civilisation gone, society come, "it"—the centralised collectivist system—"will be a superfluous and meaningless survival." "Socialism is the abolition of this bogey—the State." Truly, an Anarchist Daniel has come to judgment. Was there ever a better? Could any one more effectually refute his exposure of Anarchism than Mr. Bax does himself, when he declares for revolution as path and Anarchism or free decentralised homeruling association as goal? One closes his book with a pervasive sense of satisfaction, and the conviction that there can be no radical and irreconcilable difference in the Socialist camp.

### DOING ONE'S DUTY.

In last month's *Freedom*, one of our comrades, in concluding an interesting article upon science *versus* intuitive philosophy, mentioned Duty as one of the ultimate facts of human society. But is not Duty, as the term is usually applied, in direct and fundamental opposition to the principles of Anarchism?

Let us examine its meaning. When Nelson uttered his famous dictum, "England expects every man to do his duty," he meant, "Public opinion expects every Englishman to submit absolutely to the orders of such of his fellow-countrymen as have succeeded in making themselves his masters, so that at their bidding he is ready to rob and murder Frenchmen, with whom he has no quarrel, and whose only crime is that they are fighting for freedom; in fact he is bound to render up his inclination, the inmost cravings of his nature, his conscience and the guidance of his own life, absolutely into the hands of his superiors, and if he refuses, he is to be hanged as a traitor or shot as a deserter." Such was doing one's duty in the times of Nelson.

Now-a-days a workhouse porter is doing his duty when he turns back a Margaret Martin and her children to shiver all night in the street; a judge is doing his duty when he condemns a young girl to death for murdering her infant in a fit of despair; a broker is doing his duty when he drives a wretched family from their one room and sells their sticks of furniture to pay arrears of rent to a well-to-do landlord; an Irish agent is doing his duty when he burns the huts of his master's tenants; an employer is doing his duty when he extorts as much labour as possible, at as low wages as possible, from his workmen, that he may spend the wealth they produce on his own family; a capitalist is doing his duty when he introduces a new machine which throws fifty men upon the streets, and brings him in a profit that enables him to send his sons to Oxford; a lady is doing her duty when she turns a deaf ear to the misery around her to devote herself to making "home comfortable" to her masculine belongings. These people, each and all, are "doing their duty in that state of life to which it has pleased God to call them"; and yet we do not feel as if social relations were much improved or the world rendered much happier by this direction of their energy. No doubt many cases might be cited in which devotion to duty has produced good results, but as, on the other hand, it produces so much evil it is surely worth while to consider if the principle is in itself sound. The good may perchance spring from the devotion rather than the duty.

We have taken but an outside view; we must look closer. What does duty really mean? It means *that which is owing or due* from a man to his fellows. To talk of a man's duty to himself is merely to use a somewhat forced figure, wherein a man is represented as being within himself his own debtor and creditor. It is a metaphor for what may be better expressed, and we may leave it out of consideration. Duty, then, is the virtue of regarding the social relations as a debt or obligation, which it is compulsory to meet and discharge.

There are flashes of inspiration in Christian teaching, which, for the simple-hearted, have identified Christianity with the Religion of Man. "Owe no man anything," wrote Paul of Tarsus to his comrades at Rome, with their national mania for law-making "but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." And in very truth, he that would be true to himself must acknowledge no debt. Obligations enforced from without or imposed from within as debts morally owing to A, B, and C, individually or collectively, are incompatible with freedom of spirit, with that clear, direct sincerity of thought and feeling and action which is the salt of social life. "To thine own self be true; And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man." But the man who is weighed down beneath the sense that this feeling or that action is due from him, cannot be true to himself. If he is conscientious, he is perpetually wasting his energy in forcing his own nature, which every instant recoils and betrays him;

but if his self-respect and social impulse are weak, he is always attempting to discharge the burdensome obligation in appearance only, whilst he indulges himself under the rose.

There is no escape from this miserable entanglement, and the personal and social wretchedness it involves, but to pluck up heart and look boldly at the supposed necessity for bearing a load which narrows life, and suppresses the completer and nobler self that is instinctively one with its kind. What if duty be but one of those fetish ideas to which men in their ignorance have sacrificed their best happiness? What if Paul was indeed right, and the only real and actual cement of social relations is love? Then there can be no question of obligation, for it has never seriously been contended that love is a debt of which the payment can be enforced. Gloomy ascetics have preached the forcible suppression of "sinful affections," as interfering with abstract duty; but attempts to produce love by the very mildest sense of obligation are obvious failures from the nursery upward. "Go and love that dear little girl," says Timothy's anxious mother, seeking a playmate for her only child. "Shan't," says Timothy, hands in knickerbocker pockets, stoutly vindicating the dignity of his small human personality against social pressure, whilst the poor little stranger stands forlorn, her finger in her mouth. But the over-anxious mother is called away, and five minutes after, behold Master Tim seated on the floor eagerly sharing toys and sweets with the new friend, and in the evening she is carried home amidst his tears and entreaties that she may be allowed to come back soon and stay "always, always."

In fact every one spontaneously loves some at least of his fellows, and through that love would become conscious of his social impulse towards all, if he dared to be true to himself. This need to love, this social passion, is ineradicable. As Walt Whitman says, "it waits, and has been always waiting, latent in all men."

"Come, I will make the continent indissoluble,  
I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon,  
I will make divine, magnetic lands,  
With the love of comrades,  
With the life-long love of comrades."

But this "love of comrades," this indissoluble social cement, this highest expression of social feeling, is not only incapable of imposition from without, but, as every one knows from his own experience, is alien to all sense of indebtedness within. In proportion as men feel themselves brothers and equals, all feeling of obligation dies out of the hearts of those who give and those who take. In proportion to the reality and strength of fellowship is the pain of the merest suspicion that mutual relations have been determined by duty, and not by free, spontaneous inclination. And with reason; for to do one's duty is not only to degrade oneself, it is to insult one's fellow-men. Duty is as contemptuous as sincerity is respectful. To do one's duty by others is to treat them as on a lower level than oneself, as unworthy of the truth; to pass them counterfeit coin. The circulation of such false social coinage is one of the curses of our civilisation of shams, debasing all who pay or accept it.

It seems, then, that the practical effects of doing one's duty may as easily be socially mischievous as socially useful, and the principle itself is poisonous to that clear and singleminded integrity which is the breath of mutual trust and effective co-operation. Devotion to duty tends to place a man in contradiction with his own nature, and therefore to introduce an element of insincerity into all his social relations.

There is a scathing delineation of such a Soul's Tragedy in Browning's words to him who, tired of unchartered freedom, resigned himself—in that *Ode to Duty* which is the mental pabulum of our school-girls,—to the Stern Daughter of the Voice of God, to live her Bondman in the spirit of self-sacrifice:

"Shakspeare was of us, Milton was for us,  
Burns, Shelley, were with us,—they watch from their graves!  
He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,  
He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!

Blot out his name, then, record one lost soul more,  
One task more declined, one more footpath untrod,  
One more devils' triumph and sorrow for angels,  
One wrong more to man, one more insult to God!"

Let us look closer, then, and deeper, for the facts of self-consciousness which are the elements of the idea of human society. Duty is but a yoke laid upon the moral sense of mankind by the selfishness of those who have striven to subdue their fellows to their will by the imposition of a spurious morality. Like all other forms of domination, it is doomed to disappear in the light of a fuller and freer social consciousness, giving place to the spontaneous outflow of mutual love and trust, which at present it contributes to choke at the very source.

CONQUEST—INCORPORATION—FEDERATION.—Three ways, these, of social union. The first is the barbaric fashion, honestly brutal, and effective after a fashion. The second is the way of the modern "civilised" powers—Russia, Prussia, Britain, France. Let India, Tonkin, Poland, Alsace-Lorraine, and Ireland bear witness to the hypocrisy and hollowness of this way. True union, and truly social union, may only be through Federation. But federation enforced by a majority's will and vote is only the second bad way over again in disguise. To be itself and real, Federation must be free—i.e., spontaneous and of good-will. No single one individual or group may be federated against its will. Whether applied to the smallest commune, the largest group of communes, or to the whole inhabited world, this is the faith of Anarchism. But this way of uniting people demands intelligence, reasonableness, character, forbearance, self-control—and powerful meekness and kindness, like that of the good bishop in 'Les Misérables.

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF A CALLOW M.P.

"MUCH ado about nothing" or the debate on the address to the empty Crown, continues to run at Her Majesty's Opera House, Westminster. The minister managers are delighted with their success. "All play and no work" is their motto. There is no more reality about the interchange of speeches than about the ineffectual sword-play in the ghost-land of our Norse ancestors.

There is no persuasion, no conversion. Each member enters and sits down with his mind quite made up beyond all risk of change under any possible assault of statements or reasonings. When you first stand up to communicate something that as you feel presses to be said and heard, it staggers you to find next to no one listening, unless you happen to be orator, wit, terror, or tom-fool. Perhaps you are none of these, and neither notorious nor notable, but just an ordinary man with average honesty, disinterestedness, and public spirit, who thinks he has a fact or conviction that demands utterance and audience.

So, everybody goes in and out, crosses before you, talks, laughs, reads, writes, just as he likes, and you have delivered yourself of your message to absolutely no purpose, unless it be to some purpose that the reporters of their free grace have chosen to pick up an odd word or two, just enough to make you out a gasping unintelligible fool in to-morrow's *Times* or *Daily News*.

Yet you soon find that you have nothing exceptional to complain of.

The truth is M.P.'s do not assemble to speak to each other, but with the hope of finding the ear of their special public through their party and local journals.

Accordingly, it might as well be enacted once for all that their long set speeches should be taken as read or heard, and handed up to the press-gallery, to the incalculable advantage and furtherance of business.

This new rule of procedure is recommended to the Government.

Another feature of the sham-fight of our palaver-house is that the hardest blows seem to hurt nobody. It is to all appearance stage fence and theatrical horse-play. For surely, if the war of words was in real earnest there would not be so much friendly hobnobbing and bandying of compliments and jokes in the tea-room, lobby, and smoking-room immediately afterwards.

There you find Macbeth and Macduff, Richard and Richmond, are very good friends. This sort of thing does smack a little of play-acting and humbug, and it does look as if the "representatives of the people" and the representatives of themselves and privilege, were at bottom and behind the scenes representatives of one and the same class.

Westminster is, in fact, a very pleasant and emasculating club.

On the stage, the upshot is weary and intolerable waste of breath and time. The just expectations of the people are disappointed. When the Lanarkshire miners interview the Irish party in the library of the House, soliciting their help to get an eight-hour clause through, even Irish "patriots" poke fun at them, and Parnell, "the uncrowned king," with a smile quietly intimates to the petitioners that "probably their will be no business done this Session!"

"But the Irishmen will be guided by what the Scottish members will or can do!"

Thereupon, the poor Scotch colliers depart "with that flea in their lug," to reflect on the uses and benefits of representative Government. Some day they and their fellows will cry, "Down with all such shams and delusions!"

## DUVAL.

AN outcry has been raised, not only in the middle-class press, but even amongst revolutionary Socialists themselves, against the French workman condemned to death for taking some jewellery from an empty house, offering armed resistance to the policeman who arrested him, and boldly asserting at his trial that he had acted upon principle. As we ourselves have received several protests against our allusion to Duval in last month's *Freedom*, we publish a brief statement of our position with regard to this affair. The quotations are from our *confrère*, *Le Révolté*.

"The thief who steals to satisfy his passions without attempting to produce anything, is in our eyes merely an exploiter who is not provided with the capital to rob us 'legally.' Such a man has nothing to do with the ideas we defend. Like a middle-class exploiter he is trying to live as a parasite at the expense of Society, let him settle his own accounts with the middle-classdom of which he is the product and the corollary."

Such a man, in the opinion of our Paris comrades, who have carefully investigated the case, is *not* Duval. On the contrary, he is a Socialist workman, honestly convinced, as are all other Socialists, that accumulations of private property are so much social wealth stolen from Society at large, by individuals to whom no government or law can give any moral right to retain their spoils.

"He was firmly convinced that the appropriators of existing wealth are nothing but thieves unjustly appropriating the fruit of the labour of past and present generations, that the pleasures with which they are gorged are wrung from the misery caused to the producers by this appropriation. Therefore he found means to relieve one of these appropriators of a portion of the capital thus unfairly retained, and he did it with the purpose of supplying the Socialist propaganda with funds, the Socialist propaganda which aims at forcing all exploiters to disgorge. In fact, he passed simply from theory to practice. The outcry against him raised by certain revolutionary Socialists amounts merely to this: We are quite ready to preach the restoration of capital in theory, but it must be on the condition that those who listen are content to follow our lead and not trouble their heads about carrying theory into practice. If need be let them send us to Parliament to roll out sonorous speeches, we are ready to devote ourselves; that will not bind us to anything, and will allow us to retain the esteem of respectable people (*i.e.*, of the middle-class), amongst whom we hope

to attain a place. But when you come to take our words seriously and translate them into action—pooh! we will have nothing to do with it. That is dangerous."

Duval's object was to obtain funds for the propaganda; but he was at the same time one of the unemployed, a locksmith, whose known Socialist opinions caused him to be refused work by master after master. Suppose he had stolen to supply his own needs? Before we blame him let us face the alternatives. Suppose a man comes to you and says, "I have no work, my children and I have not eaten for two days!" what would you advise him to do? Beg? Kill himself? Follow Duval's example? We hardly open a newspaper without seeing an account of some unfortunate actually forced to adopt one of these three courses.

We Anarchists believe that open revolt against such a state of Society and its laws is the most manly, the most human course for any individual in such a predicament; it is the only course which can open out a way of deliverance for one and all. Exploitation and its attendant miseries are only rendered possible by the slavish submission of the victims, and every individual who has energy and courage to revolt sets an example to his fellows. If he boldly explains his motives and opinions, he helps most effectually to destroy the bondage to the superstition that property and law have right on their side, a bondage which contributes far more than policemen and armies to hold the people down. As far as we can judge of him by his attitude and the facts of his life, Duval is simply a Socialist who has had the courage of his opinions.

## LAW AND ORDER IN IRELAND.

### V.—"AMURATH TO AMURATH SUCCEEDS."

FOR a while the mean and cautious Henry VII. debated whether the Irish game was worth the burning of any more candles. The "Pale" had shrunk to a circuit of twenty miles radius, and elsewhere throughout the land not a trace of the three centuries of so-called English Government remained save the miseries it had caused. The incessant strife had almost destroyed agriculture. The fields lay waste, for if a man sowed he knew not who should reap, and the safer means of subsistence was found in herds that could be driven into enclosures on the approach of an enemy. One might imagine, on reading Mr. Froude's 'History of Ireland,' that the minute picture he paints of the popular misery and disorder without the "Pale" at this period was a direct contrast to the peace and prosperity of those who lived under the shadow of Dublin Castle. He judiciously suppressed the fact that the most miserable wretches in the island at that time were those who were "daily subject to the King's laws." With the diminution of English territory there by no means went a corresponding decrease of high officials. There were "as many Justices of the King's Bench and of the Common Pleas, and as many Barons of the Exchequer, and as many officers, ministers, and clerks, as ever there were when all the land for the most part was subject to the laws." This old State paper just quoted, which is entitled 'The State of Ireland and the Plan of its Reformation,' goes on to say that "the said subjects be so grievously vexed daily with the said Courts, that they be glad to sell their freeholds for ever rather than to suffer always the exactions of the said Courts," and in conclusion adds, "All the English folk of the counties of Dublin, Kildare, Meath, and Uryel (Louth), be more oppressed than any other folk of this land, English or Irish." No amount of brand-new English officials making any appreciable difference in the state of affairs, Henry devised a plan which at least had the merit of cheapness. The Irish revenue had ceased to pay the English executive, so the Government was to be committed to the most powerful and most troublesome noble, "who, in consideration of his nominally acting as the King's lieutenant, was at his own expense to conduct the Government for the benefit of himself and his faction." Gerald, earl of Kildare, the man, whom "all Ireland could not rule," was elected to rule all Ireland. And thoroughly he did it, if trampling under foot all who opposed him, annexing his neighbour's lands, levying "coygne and livery" on the unfortunate peasants, be ruling. His contempt for the lawyer King of England was un concealed, but it passed unnoticed until the appearance of Lambert Simnel as the young Earl of Warwick in Ireland, when Kildare went so far as publicly to acknowledge the right of this claimant to the throne of England. Sir Edward Poynings was despatched in 1494 with a force of 1,000 picked men to supersede Kildare as deputy. All officials suspected of favouring Kildare were replaced by men fresh from England, and Kildare himself was kidnapped on board a barque and sent to London, where he lay two years in the Tower. Then the law-making began afresh.

The statutes known as 10 Henry VII., or Poynings' law, comprised a re-enactment of our old friend the statute of Kilkenny (done into English, the first occasion this language was used in the making of laws for Ireland) minus the clause against the use of Irish, which was so generally spoken as to make its immediate abolition an impossibility. A kindly law was repealed that had been passed under the mild and just lieutenancy of Richard, Duke of York, against the arrest of refugees by means of writs issued in England. But the most important measure of all was the one providing that thereafter no legislation whatever should be proceeded with in Ireland unless the bills to be proposed were first submitted to the King and Council in England, and were returned certified under the great seal of the realm. After two years of office, Poynings was withdrawn to make room for Kildare, who was released and sent back to Ireland to counteract the influence of an alliance between some of the Irish chiefs and James IV. of Scotland in support of Henry's second tormentor, Perkin Warbeck. Kildare's re-appearance effected its purpose, and although absence had somewhat lessened his power, enough remained to render him an efficient nether mill-stone for the unceasing trituration of the Irish people. Contention for power and grabbing for land went on bravely among the great families. The Butlers, who had been created Earls of Ormond, contended the zenith with the Kildares. A story is told of Kildare's attempting to conciliate his rival, Pierce, eighth earl of Ormond, by giving him his daughter Margaret to wife. To her father's horror, Margaret became so much one of the family she had married into that she proved his worst foe, and many an acre was wrested from the Kildares by her unflinching rapacity. On her death-bed this dame was entreated to restore some of the ill-gotten lands, and warned what penalty awaited her if she died impenitent. Her reply was, "Better one old woman should burn for eternity than that the Butlers should be curtailed of their estates." The spirit of landlordism has undergone but slight change since then. The nineteenth century has extinguished the fires of hell, the miserable hovels of poor tenants are kindled in their stead.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## NOTICES.

Annual Subscription, including postage, 1s. 6d.

All communications to be addressed to The Editor of FREEDOM, 34 Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

FREEDOM can be obtained in London from W. Reeves, 185 Fleet Street; the Freethought Publishing Company, 63 Fleet Street; the Socialist League Office, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C.; or ordered through a newsagent.