

FREEDOM

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST SOCIALISM.

VOL. 2.—No. 14.

NOVEMBER, 1887.

MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

FORWARD!

AFTER the summer's apparent listlessness and inaction, the Revolutionary movement has started into fresh life, and, with that awakening, has entered upon a new phase of development.

The keynote of the new departure was struck last month by the unemployed of Norwich in the little placard, written and posted by unknown hands, which so seriously alarmed the local authorities that they swore in 200 special constables. "NOTICE TO ALL CONCERNED: *The unemployed do not intend to starve any longer. If employment is not found for them, they will soon make some.*"

As the result of the Government house-to-house enquiries at the close of the slack season last winter, it appears that amongst 29,451 men 8008 were out of work. At the beginning of September there were from 400 to 600 men, women and children utterly homeless, sitting night after night in and near Trafalgar Square—criminals in the eye of the English law, in that they were vagrants wandering about with no visible means of subsistence. From the statistics collected by the S.D.F. and the *Pall Mall Gazette* last year, it appears only too certain that at least 600,000 able-bodied men and women were out of work in London before the frost set in this October, and that calculation leaves unheeded the hundreds of thousands slowly starving on wages inadequate to maintain healthy life in a human being.

Yet this mass of misery is nothing new, nothing unusual. The distress is at present merely normal, say the committee of superior persons gathered in the Lord Mayor's comfortable parlour. But if the distress is the old, old story, the attitude of the sufferers is changed. What is new is the rising determination to suffer no longer.

Last winter the unemployed were so many isolated units, each man and woman tramping wearily and hopelessly from one property-monopolist to another, imploring for leave to work,—meekly accepting any odd job which kept him or her hanging, as it were, upon a single hair above the pit of starvation. With the exception of such spasmodic outbursts as the window-breaking in London and the Norwich riot, the people of late years have made no protest against the inhumanity of those men who appropriate to themselves the wealth of society, and live in luxury and ease on the labour of others, whilst masses of their fellows are starving. The only conscious and definite revolt came from small knots of Socialists—impracticable visionaries even in the eyes of their fellow-workmen.

Suddenly the scene is changed. The people are no longer tramping, each helpless and alone, entreating work as a boon. They are boldly meeting together and demanding work as a right. They have made common cause, and withstood and defeated like men the attempts of the police—the hired guardians of property-monopolists—to drive them, their sufferings and their wrongs, out of sight. And they have done this at the bidding of no leaders, in obedience to the rules of no organisation. Their action is the spontaneous outgrowth of the pressure of social needs and the ferment of ideas amongst the masses themselves.

The movement is small as yet, and formless, but nevertheless it is the beginning of the end. For the first time since middle-class Radicals threw dust in the eyes of the English people, and turned the revolt of the workers against capitalist and landlord tyranny into an agitation for the extension of the franchise, the inhabitants of London have swarmed unbidden and unsummoned into its streets and squares and parks to discuss, not a political, but a social grievance, and successfully asserted their right to do so.

At last the people seem to have lost all faith in patiently waiting for better days on earth to grow out of the "enlightened self-interest" of their masters, as they have lost all hope of the off-chance of better days in heaven. And the impulse is forming and growing in them to seek better days here and now by their own initiative, by the common action of those men who are equals and brothers in toil and misfortune. In the development of that impulse lies the salvation of society.

There is only one effectual relief for the suffering of the unemployed and ill-employed alike. To employ themselves; to substitute for the wage-system free and self-organised co-operation amongst the workers, for the direct supply of the needs of all.

Is it mockery when, instead of Government relief-works, we Anarchist Socialists preach such a remedy to starving men, who have nothing to work with, and no food or shelter whilst they work? No. To advise desperate men to wring temporary scraps of relief from the terrors of their oppressors—that is the mockery; for it puts into the hands of

those oppressors the means to retain their monopoly of wealth and power by ineffectual concessions, and so to prolong the misery they cause.

The unemployed cannot employ themselves. Why? Because all they need for their work—food, clothes, shelter, tools, machinery, workshops, factories, land—are monopolised by individuals, who will not let these things be used unless they can make a profit out of the labour of those who use them. The first thing, then, that the unemployed, and those whose lives are stripped of all joy by excessive work and miserable pay, and all who feel the wrongs of their fellows as their own, have to do, is to put an end once and for all to this monstrous monopoly of property. To lay hands directly on those stores of wealth which have been created by the workers, and from which all who work have a just claim to supply their needs.

The monopolists will resist? Then let them. The fight must be fought—and won; for it is the price of human development. We cannot shirk it and be men. And for those who fall in the struggle, it is a happier fate than slow starvation in a rat-hole, or to be cheived by the police from one door-step to another.

Then, when existing wealth and the land are free and common to all, self-employment will no longer seem a mockery to the workers, and every able-bodied man or woman who is unemployed will be so because he or she is a thief, a lazy vagabond who chosés to live idly on other people's labour.

A PRACTICAL SOLUTION.

A HUNDRED and thirty thousand unemployed, in this city alone—such is the result of the parliamentary and private enquiries. Ninety-one thousand paupers; six hundred thousand at least of men, women, and children, out of the 4½ million inhabitants of London, in want of food, shelter, and clothes. Such is the result of aristocracy and middle-class rule. Our masters say that we must keep them, and provide them a rich living, because they alone are capable of organising our industries and trade. And that is the way in which they have organised them. Plenty of luxury for themselves; sheer misery for the masses.

One hundred and thirty thousand men, ready to work, but prevented from working; ready to till the fields and to grow for themselves the food they want; ready to build for themselves decent houses to lodge in; to extract coal for themselves to warm their modest homes; to weave and to sew for themselves the clothes to wear. But—prevented from tilling and growing, from building and weaving, by the landowner, the money-lender, the owner of the manufactory and the shop-keeper.

All kinds of means are proposed every day for finding useful employment for those who are now unemployed. Some of the schemes might be a boon for humanity—not a sheer useless waste of human efforts and a new source of evils. But none of the good means can be put into practice, because everywhere the landlord, the banker, the capitalist stand in the way.

Suppose that any organised body of Socialists, who obviously enjoy the confidence of the workers, should distribute tickets in each house in London, and ask every unemployed person to write on his ticket what he is able and willing to do. Everyone would answer that he is ready to do some kind of useful work. The answers would be: "I am ready to work on a farm," or "Ready to work in a cotton mill," or at brick-laying, or at a cutlery, or boot, or cloth, or glass manufactory, and so on. In short, everybody would state his willingness to do something necessary for humanity.

By the way, if like tickets were distributed among those rich people who treat the unemployed as loafers and idlers, what would be their answers? "I am ready to preach patience to the workers, provided I have dined well myself"; "Ready to write leaders in newspapers, and to pronounce speeches, in order to prove that myself and my friends are the only people who can save England from an outbreak of the labourers"; "Ready to spend five afternoons in shopping and the sixth in visiting the poor"; "Ready to play the piano for two hours a-day and to dance till daylight." Such would be the answers we should get from the West-end. While the East-end would testify its willingness to work, the West-end would testify its willingness to squander the produce of the East-end's labour.

Suppose, further, that a summons be issued to all the unemployed of London; that all those who are willing to work but have no work be invited to gather on a given day at some of the rich clubs which

adorn the region of Piccadilly and Pall Mall: those who are ready to till the soil, at the Carlton and Constitutional Clubs; the bricklayers at the Reform Club; the carpenters at the National Liberal Club, and so on. (Let us hope, of course, that the very democratic Tories and the very radical Liberals will be happy to receive the unemployed in their marble halls.) And suppose, further, that each of the trades agree together to start for themselves some useful work. Suppose that the labourers have sent their delegation to Sussex, and that their delegation reports that there are, on the estates of Lord Do-Nothing, some three hundred acres of land, rented to London gentlemen for pheasant-shooting, or kept by the noble lord for the same noble purpose; which acres, if properly cleared, drained, and tilled, would, with proper instruments, yield (at forty bushels the acre) the food for no less than 1200 persons, and the double of that if some of them were cultivated according to the rules of the scientific culture of modern gardeners. Suppose they agree also with their neighbours of the Reform Club—the bricklayers and carpenters—as to the building, close by to said land, of two hundred cottages to shelter the human inhabitants who may choose to take the place of the noble lord's pheasants and deer, and make up their minds to prove what England *can* produce, without compelling the Hindoos to sell their wheat for nothing and to starve themselves.

Immediately the noble lord would exclaim: "This land is mine! If you will till it you must buy it, and pay me a hundred pounds or more the acre." The owners of the Middlesex clay-fields would exclaim: "This clay is ours, and unless you pay so much for it we shan't permit you to make bricks of it." And the agricultural implement maker would say: "You may be right in saying that this spade has cost only sixpence paid in wages, since the iron ore was extracted from the earth until it took the shape of a spade. You may speak the truth, or even go beyond the mark; but I have paid so much in royalties, and so much to my money-lender, and I must have so much benefit for myself to teach my lads how to rule you, and my lasses how to dance and receive high-born ladies at our next dinner party." And finally, although there is within London itself plenty of food to feed all Londoners during at least eighteen months, it all belongs to somebody; and the future agricultural colony may promise and swear to the corn-dealers, and grocers, and all the merchants of Mincing Lane and the butchers of Smithfield that they will repay within a year the whole amount of the food advanced to them, they will have no food advanced by the said dealers and merchants unless they undertake also the obligations of providing the families of at least two or three scores of corn-merchants and butchers with pretty carriages, fine horses, Persian carpets, Lyons silks, Brussels lace, French and Spanish wines,—plenty of those wines, because the corn-merchants and butchers are not drunkards of the same sort as the hungry woman condemned the other day to fourteen days' hard labour for refusing to go to the work-house: they never drink twopenny-worth of gin at a public-house.

Take one after the other any of the relief schemes proposed during the last fortnight, and everywhere you will find the same: the landlord refuses the land; the manufacturer refuses the implements of labour; the coal-pit owner, access to the mine; the City merchant, the food. And nothing remains for the unemployed but to starve—unless they take possession of the land, the mine, the manufactories, and the food, which all belong to them, because all that is due to the labour of the whole of the nation, not to the few land and capital-owners.

No relief works can relieve the present misery unless the work done is some useful reproductive work. Of course, some vestry may set some of the unemployed to build a bridge across the canal, but 130,000 unemployed will not find employment in building a bridge. The Board of Works and the War Office may erect fortifications around London; but they know perfectly well that those fortifications, useless against the foreigner, will be intended only to bombard London itself on the day when its workers shall overthrow their present rulers and try to start a new society without land grabbers and capitalist loafers. They can do so, because they know that such relief works will not cost them a penny from their own pockets, and will be paid for by those who only can pay for anything—namely, the workers who produce anything, not those who live themselves on the workman's labour.

But whatever may be the useful work that may be proposed for the unemployed, everywhere the landowner, the usurer, the capitalist, and the merchant will stand in the way. If we propose to increase the crops of this country by cultivating the parks of the idlers, we are told that we should thus reduce the incomes of the farmers; and if we venture to say that there would be no harm in that because the landlords would be compelled to reduce their rents, we are told that these poor creatures are already almost ruined, and would be so completely if their incomes were reduced from ten thousand pounds a year to only two thousand.

If we propose to raise coal for those who have none in their cold black dens of Chelsea and Whitechapel, we are told that the incomes of the coal-owners are already so low that they would be compelled to abandon the extraction of coal. And if we add that that would be precisely what we want, because then the miners would take possession of the mines, and work them for the benefit of the nation, we are treated as revolutionists, and reminded that our comrade Mowbray has made acquaintance with the inside of a gaol precisely for having indulged in such language.

If we finally point out that in the labourer's dwelling there is a positive want of clothes and furniture—not to speak of anything that might bring a gleam of light and cheerfulness into his home—and if we propose to start workshops for supplying the labourer with cheap furniture and clothes, cheap reading and the like, we are told that the

poor furniture kings, one of whom died the other day leaving two million pounds to his widow and children, would be ruined; that the woollen cloth manufacturers would be compelled to abandon their manufactures and emigrate to better countries, like India, where they first starve the people and then make them work for fourpence a day. And if we say again that to relieve us of their presence would be the very best thing they could do, and that the workmen taking possession of the manufactories would manage them much better, and produce precisely what their fellows are in want of, we are dryly answered, "Perish your unemployed, we don't care a brass farthing for them. We care for the furniture kings and the cotton lords."

And so, again and again, wherever we try to find an issue from the present conditions, we come to this. The workers *must* take possession of the land, the mines, and the machinery, and must make use of them themselves for the benefit of all society. That means, of course, a revolution, but every day proves with new facts and new arguments the necessity, the advisability, of such a revolution.

We are often told that the English are too businesslike a people for revolutions. But we think, on the contrary, that precisely because they are a business people they can indulge no longer in mere talk, in fallacious schemes of relief, and in measures which bring no relief at all and merely render the situation worse. Because the English are a business people they will take the bull by the horns; they will suggest practical measures. But as soon as they consider any measure really *practical*, and consider it under its really *practical* aspects, they find the landlord and the capitalist standing in the way and preventing society from taking any practical measure at all, and precisely because they are business-like and practical they are brought to the necessity of getting rid of them. We come to the necessity of a revolution; but instead of making it for the mere *words* of Equality, Liberty, and Fraternity—however grand these words are—the English will approach it in a business-like fashion, by discussing how to provide work for 50,000 labourers, for 10,000 miners, for 10,000 workers thrown out of the factories, and so on. And they will conduct it in a business like fashion—not by merely nominating a few men to do their business, but by trying to do it themselves for themselves.

NOTES.

The performance of a play with the Social Revolution for theme marks an epoch in the history of the English Socialist propaganda. More especially when, as in our comrade William Morris's Interlude—"The Tables Turned, or Nupkins Awakened"¹—the Social Revolution is understood to mean the total overthrow of domination in its three principal modern forms of property, law, and authority.

* * *

The broad, quaint humour of the trial scene is delightful, with its touches of pathos and deep human sympathy, and its faithful delineation of "the stupid red-tape that hinders the court from getting at the truth; the impossibility of making your stupid judge understand the real state of the case, because he is not thinking of you and your life as a man, but of a set of rules drawn up to allow men to make money of other people's misfortunes." And all this gloomy reality of our days is exquisitely contrasted with the manly and humane good-sense, and merry, kindly fooling of the men and women of the free commune that will be the reality of the future; men and women too busy, too happy, too social for revenge. "Punish you?" says Jack Freeman to the abject Nupkins, the Mr. Justice Nupkins of the bad old times, "How can we punish you? Who do you think is going to do such work as that! People punish others because they like to; and we don't like to. Once more, learn to live decently." Nupkins: "But how *am* I to live?" Jack: "You must work a little." Nupkins: "But what at, since you object to lawyers?" Jack: "Look round you, friend, at the fields all yellowing for harvest,—we will find you work to do." Nupkins: "Ah, I see. This means hard labour for life after all."

* * *

The whole play, with its poetry and its wit, is the work of a man who has realised in his own soul what a Social Revolution means, and would lead his fellows to "look on life of its rags of habit bared." And to hard pressed Revolutionists, who amidst the dust and heat of the strife find it difficult to keep ever before their mental vision the "pictures of all the glory to come," such a living presentment of their hope and conviction is as a draught of fresh and sparkling water to parched lips.

* * *

An American capitalist, named Daniels, being asked to contribute to the defence fund for the Chicago Anarchists, replied: "I pay 10,000 dollars yearly to have such people prosecuted. It is the poor people that ought to furnish the money to defend them, as it was their interests they were working for."—*Denver Labour Enquirer*.

* * *

The property-holding class in America do not hesitate to avow what was plainly stated by the prosecution during the Chicago trial, namely, that even according to the law of Illinois our comrades were no more guilty of "conspiracy to murder" than the thousands who shared their opinions, but that they were picked out for capitalist vengeance as the most capable and devoted champions of the cause of labour. One prominent Social Reformer alone dares to deny the truth, that Pecksniff of the American labour movement, the renegade Henry George.

¹ Performed for the first time on October 15, in the Hall of the Socialist League, 13 Farringdon Road, E.C. Book of the Words for sale at above address, price 4d.

HOME RULE AND AFTER.

IMPRESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH ANARCHIST IN IRELAND.

To coerce the Irish people into the commission of legal crime seems to be the aim and object of the policy of the present administration. Law to be observed must either be the crystallised expression of the beliefs of the vast majority of those to whom it is enunciated, or be based upon the superior and sufficient physical force of the law-makers. In Ireland part of the written or paper law is ineffective because it does not command the assent of the people, and the makers of the law are unable to use sufficient physical force to overcome the passive resistance of the law-breakers.

The breakers of the law are, however, so united in their opposition to the operation of the written law, and so bound together by common interests, that by the sanction of individual conviction (the only sure and certain basis of law) and the inherent force of voluntary organisation, they are able successfully to defy and set at nought the edicts of the law-makers and administrators. On more than one occasion, during a recent visit to Ireland, I found that even some members of the constabulary were in sympathy with the aims and objects of the National League, but that their economic servitude prevented their manifesting that sympathy in any public or practical manner. Under the shadow of the Vice-regal Lodge in Phoenix Park, I found such an one, who, thorough Nationalist at heart, and fervent admirer of Mr. Gladstone, was nevertheless troubled about the economic condition of the body-guard of law and order if controlled by an Irish Parliament. He was much afraid that neither pay nor pension would in the days to come be so high as at present. Other members of the constabulary expressed the same view, but these few exceptions only served to throw into greater contrast the tone and manner of the constabulary as a body. Its members have all the vices of pampered men. In any village or small town their barrack is the largest building; and at every railway station two, three, or more members of the force are to be seen peering and prying into every railway carriage. They occasionally relieve the monotony of a comparatively luxuriously idle career by the promotion of moonlighting and other outrages, apparently by way of way of exemplifying their utility to the bureaucracy at the Castle. I happened to be near Lisdoonvarna the day after Sergeant Whelehan had been killed, and was immediately informed by an Irish friend that the so-called "outrage" was a "put-up" or police job intended to divert the attention of the English people from the murders at Michelstown. The evidence given at the inquest on the body of Whelehan has more than justified my friend's statement, and shows that the police in Ireland are animated by the same spirit as their *confreeres* in Russia, and I fear I must add Chicago. The contempt and detestation in which they are held in Ireland seemed summed up in a sentence I heard uttered by an Irish Member of Parliament from a Tipperary platform to some four thousand of his constituents, that "no decent man should walk on the same side of the street with a policeman."

No sentiment expressed at that platform seemed more acceptable to the people to whom it was addressed, save perhaps the one which expressed thanks to the friendly English invader. The friendly English invaders of Ireland this autumn—even those who, like myself, look beyond Home Rule for national salvation—have met with such a reception as could only be accorded by a generous, forgiving, and kindly-hearted people.

Their forgiving disposition is still further evidenced by the fact that even yet the door of reconciliation is not shut irrevocably against any moderately decent landlord.

I should, however, be sorry to lead anyone to think that there are many moderately decent landlords in Ireland; but the study of economics is not more popular in Ireland than in England, and the fact that a man is a landlord counts for something with the Irish people. Many tenants would be content to pay what they consider a fair rent to an individual landlord provided they had fixity of tenure and the rent paid was spent in the country. "Indeed, we want to let the landlords down *aisy*," said an Irish shopkeeper to me, "and so we will let them have a House of Lords to amuse themselves in; but if they won't stop in the country, devil a bit will they have any rent out of the country."

The majority of the people—or at any rate of the articulate people—would apparently be satisfied with making the landlords annuitants on the land, or with some form of peasant proprietary; but the effect of the teaching of Michael Davitt is to be traced in many a cottier's hut and small shopkeeper's house, and though that teaching is not so sound economically as might be wished, it yet leads by stages to the recognition of the truth that all wealth is produced through the pressure of society, and is the joint property of the community. It is the imperfect appreciation of this idea by the Irish people which makes a tour in Ireland in some respects a sad holiday. The revolt of the workers must in due evolutionary course follow Home Rule, and as the members of the Irish Parliamentary Party are fully abreast, if not ahead, of the majority of the Irish people, in social questions, it is exceedingly desirable that the men who at present represent Ireland at Westminster should also serve her on College Green.

At present, as a nation, Ireland stands on the eve of the realisation of her hopes. The dreams which her poets have dreamed, and the visions which her younger sons have always seen, are to be dreams and visions no longer. She is to be a nation—a "United Ireland," govern-

ing herself and working out her own salvation. For seven centuries this has been her ideal and her demand. In proportion to the length and severity of the struggle has been the hope and expectation of the people, but now, on the eve of victory, the poorer people have a presentiment that national parliament rule is but the dawn of their deliverance—that their daybreak is not yet. They hunger and thirst for economic independence even more than for national independence; but whilst national independence seems to them obtainable, economic independence appears remote, and only realisable, if realisable at all, through the efforts of Irish parliamentary men. This was humourously though pathetically illustrated in the course of a conversation I had with a working woman whom I met in a village near Queenstown, gathering for her own use the fruit which the hedgerows afford for sustenance to the poor and needy, and who told me that she was an advocate for "Home Rule and bottled porter." I elicited from her that the ability to buy bottled porter represented in her mind the power, rather than the favourite direction, of affluence, but that she doubted if a national parliament would enable her to reach that point in the scale of luxury.

Her belief in the natural poverty of Ireland is shared by most of its people, who are content to accept economic servitude as the accepted portion and lot of the vast majority. A national parliament will intensify economic discontent, and by its deeds convince the workers that the movement which shall give them class freedom, or economic independence, must emanate from themselves.

THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM.

BRITAIN.

THE UNEMPLOYED OF LONDON.—Towards the middle of last month the increasing number of Londoners who could get no work to do began to assemble day by day in Trafalgar Square to discuss their situation and endeavour to force the property-monopolists to allow them to labour. On October 12 they marched in procession, with black flags flying, to wait on Sir James Ingram at Bow Street Police Court, where that respectable magistrate informed them that they were "making a theatrical exhibition," and that "the law provided a sufficient maintenance for persons who chose to avail themselves of it." Asked if he would give them food and shelter in prison if they sacked bakers' shops, he replied that they were "exceedingly impertinent," and "deserved no compassion." Even this brutality unfortunately stirred the people to no further action than a march through the city. On October 14 they walked in procession to the Mansion House, and were set upon and beaten and kicked by the police. The next day the police violently attacked the meeting in Trafalgar Square, hustling, striking, charging, and trampling the people, and this policy of provocation and brutality continued until, on the 19th, the unemployed were finally driven out of the Square and betook themselves to Hyde Park, whither they were pursued by the constables, horse and foot. For four days the conflict was carried on in and round the park. On one occasion the gates were closed on the people and the mounted police charged the crowd thus hemmed in and helpless. On other days they principally signalled themselves by attacking the unemployed as they returned from the day's meeting, severely injuring many and arresting all who showed special energy and manhood in resisting. The police-courts have been crowded day by day with "rioters." One case may suffice to illustrate the "justice" they obtained. W. Macdonald, carpenter, charged at Marlborough Street with riotous conduct and assaulting the police, for calling on the people to defend themselves with stones and striking a constable, was asked what he had to say for himself. He replied: "Very little. I intended going home quietly after the meeting, but no sooner had I left the park than a crowd of policemen came rushing round the corner and knocked me down. I jumped to my feet and went for the first policeman I saw, and that happened to be the sergeant. If it had been any other man besides one in policeman's clothes I would have done the same." The magistrate: "Three months' hard labour." But when a workman, who had seen a number of police raining blows on one man and called out, "What scandalous conduct! are you Englishmen?" and thereupon been seized by the beard and beaten with a truncheon, brought a charge of assault against a constable, the case was dismissed by police magistrate Newton, with the remark, "Whatever treatment the complainant has received, he only met with his deserts."

But in spite of police-court terrorism and sentences of hard labour by the dozen, the people defended themselves with sticks and stones and their fists, and held their meetings just the same; and on Sunday October 23rd they returned to Trafalgar Square in a solid mass, filling the huge square to overflowing, and afterwards marching in procession to Westminster Abbey.

Coercion in London has failed. There has been an outcry in the middle-class Liberal press against the brutality of the police; for the middle-class also have an interest in vindicating the right of public meeting. The Government dare not try coercion in London and Ireland too, and so the unemployed may hold meetings as they please. But a man can't support his family on public meetings, and the men are not much nearer employment. They have been to the Home Office, the Mansion House, the police courts, Westminster Abbey, and found everywhere the so-called servants of the people and administrators of their affairs declaring themselves powerless to help in this extremity.

Meanwhile Sir Charles Warren has ordered the arrest of every homeless person who refuses to go to the workhouse, and has issued a proclamation warning the humane people who have been providing the starving with bread and coffee not to feed them again.

How much longer will the sufferers wait before they lay hands for themselves on the ample supply of food and clothes ready for them in London?

COERCION AND REVOLT IN IRELAND.—The revolt of the Irish people against foreign dictatorship and land monopoly grows daily more effective. The Government attempt to put down public meeting by violence at Michelstown; the coroner's jury on the slain bring in a verdict of wilful murder against the policemen who fired on the crowd. To cover their discredit, the human bloodhound of the police, the ex-convict Calligan, receives money from Head-Constable Whelehan to incite some peasants to a "moonlighting outrage;" Whelehan is killed by the Moonlighters, and the infamous treachery of Calligan and his employers revealed at the inquest. The brutal emergency men, hired to enforce the rights of property, shoot dead John Kinsella, who is preparing to defend his and his neighbours' cattle from distraint—i.e., legal robbery; the coroner's jury bring in a verdict of wilful murder against the whole gang. The Government proclaims the meetings of the National League; larger and more enthusiastic meetings of the League, and of protest against the authorities, are held all over the country; the people, taking humorous delight in their ingenuity in tricking the police (*vide* the torchlight meeting at midnight, in Woodford attended by the English Radicals, so closely watched by detectives, and by thousands of Irish from all the country round, while the authorities were snoring; when a few hours after all was over, police and soldiers made their appearance with beer barrels and other creature comforts for the custodians of a town in a state of siege!) Unable to prevent meetings, the Castle attempts to muzzle the agitators in the Press and prosecutes the editors of *United Ireland* and *The Nation* for recounting the history of the said prohibited assemblies; the Lord Mayor of Dublin, editor of *The Nation*, attends the police court in state, and amid the acclamations of the city, the charge against him is dismissed on the ground that there is no legal proof that the forbidden meeting ever really took place! The latest exploit of the constabulary, in forcibly dragging the Englishman, Wilfred Blunt, off the platform at a proclaimed meeting, and treating his wife, who defended him, with brutal violence, is scarcely likely to restore respect for authority. Meanwhile the cruel evictions continue, in spite of the new Land Act; and the peasants, men, women, and children, resist as bravely as ever. Those that are arrested under the Crimes Act are dragged to prison for two or four or six months' hard labour; but they go as heroes celebrating a triumph, amid the acclamations of a crowd rendered more enthusiastic and more revolutionary by each arrest. Before long, we may hope, the prisons will be attacked and the prisoners rescued. The magistrates offered to save one young girl from "the disgrace of imprisonment" on her promise of future submission. "It is no disgrace to go to prison for Ireland," she retorted, and, amid the cheers of the listeners, indignantly declined the offered release. "You are the best little girl in Ireland," exclaimed the counsel, as the angry magistrates "cleared the court;" but Ireland is rich in brave women. At Gweedore, one old woman of seventy, with her son and daughter and two girls, held her hut until it was actually tumbled about her ears, against a squad of emergency men, backed by fifty police armed with truncheons and fifty more with firearms. No wonder that one constable, who had a human heart somewhere concealed beneath his uniform, flung away his rifle, and refused the further disgrace of serving the Government. Even the children are inspired by their parents' courage. The other day nine boys and girls held their father's cottage for some time against the bailiff's men, and four of the boys afterwards ensconced themselves in a loft and held out, in spite of loaded guns pointed at them, until they were dragged off to prison by main force. At Kilrush the police used their rifles against the men threatened with eviction, and were bravely attacked by the crowd, who carried on the fight with stones until the evening. A pity the Irish peasants are so inadequately armed; but, as it is, their brave spirit of revolt is inspiring a glowing sympathy and emulation amongst the Kelts and English of the larger island.

LONDON.—An House Rent League has been formed, on the model of the Irish National League, to force landlords to make "reasonable reductions." It is to be hoped that its members will shortly perceive that the only reasonable reduction of a landlord's claims to unearned increment is to refuse to acknowledge them altogether.

EVICCTIONS AT BROXBURN.—Our Dorsetshire correspondent explained last month how cruel a hold over labourers lives is obtained by farmers who provide cottage room as part payment of wages. The heartless evictions of the families of 43 miners on strike at Broxburn is another example of the way in which the lives of the propertyless wage-workers are at the mercy of merciless property holders. "Thanks to the competition of the capitalists in oil," says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "the dividend of the Company has suddenly run down from 22 to 15 per cent., and to save themselves from the stark staring ruin of 15 per cent., they are insisting that their miners shall suffer a reduction amounting as regards one class to 10 per cent., and as regards another class to 17 per cent." And as the company have a legal right to the mining plant, the miners can do nothing but starve themselves to punish their masters; unless, indeed, they pluck up courage to take possession of the mines and lead the way in the Revolution.

NORWICH.—Our comrade Mowbray was liberated from Ipswich Gaol on the 15th of October. His return to Norwich was a town celebration. The station, streets, and Market-place were thronged by the workers to greet the comrade who has not only spoken, but acted and suffered in the common cause.

FRANCE.

On Sunday, October 16, a crowded and enthusiastic workman's meeting in the Favié Hall, Paris, unanimously passed resolutions of sympathy with the Chicago Anarchists and indignant protest against their infamous condemnation. The meeting was organised by the Cosmopolitan League and Anarchist groups of Paris. Messages of solidarity were received from a large number of provincial groups, and from sixteen Italian towns.

After the meeting, 300 of our comrades reassembled in the Lechable Rooms in the Boulevard Menilmontant. When they were quietly leaving in small groups, about 7 p.m., the police fell upon them with drawn swords (the Parisian police carry a short sword) and wounded not only several of our comrades but some of the passers-by. Comrade Meraux (formerly manager of *Le Révolté*) was hurt in the breast and hand. He fired twice at his assailants, wounding one, but was arrested and dragged off with two other friends.

In Paris, as in England and America, the situation is intensifying between oppressors and oppressed, and if a man will guard his dignity as a human being he must be prepared to stand armed in self-defence against armed force.

The Anarchist group at Vaison having been somewhat too energetic in addressing meetings and distributing literature in the town and neighbourhood, the police suddenly arrested four of our comrades at their work on the 10th Oct. To find a charge against three of them baffled even police ingenuity. One was taken to Orange and two to Avignon and there released; but the chief of police has persuaded their employer to discharge them! Having thus deprived these three Anarchists of their bread, the authorities have committed the fourth as "réfractaire."

The Anarchist groups of Paris are preparing for an energetic propagandist campaign amongst the peasant-proprietors in the country. A new Anarchist group has been formed at Madeleine-lez Lille.

The Government have lately dispatched 500 of the unfortunate victims of social injustice, called criminals, to Cayenne in *iron cages*. The cages are watched by marines with loaded muskets, and fire pumps arranged so as to throw powerful jets of water over the unhappy wretches on the faintest sign of revolt. Whatever wrong these unfortunates have done to other men, it cannot equal the inhumanity of the guardians of law or order.

GERMANY.

Our comrade Neve, who was treacherously betrayed to the German police during a visit to Belgium, and carried across the frontier without a protest from the Belgian workmen, has been rewarded for his life-long service in the people's cause by a sentence of fifteen years' imprisonment. We trust that long before these years are passed the Social Revolution will have set him free.

The Congress of the Social Democratic Party, held at Zurich, has been chiefly remarkable for its indications of a revolutionary spirit amongst the rank and file of the party considerably in advance of their leaders, and for the absence of thought as to the future political organisation of Society betrayed in the resolution defining the attitude of Social Democracy towards Anarchism, which was proposed, but not drawn up, by Liebknecht. It does not appear to have dawned upon the mass of German Socialists that new economic relations between men imply new political relations, and that representative Government cannot be the political counterpart of Socialism.

THE FREE SPEECH CONFLICT IN AMERICA.

On October 2nd, a workman's meeting summoned by the Labour organisations of North Hudson co., at the Skating Rink, Union Hill, New Jersey, to protest against the judicial murder of the Chicago Anarchists, was prohibited, and the 1500 peaceable people assembled were set upon and clubbed by the police. "No notice was given, no Riot Act was read. The whole affair was a violent, brutal and unwarranted police riot."

On October 8th an open-air meeting was summoned by the Socialist Labour Party in Union Square, New York, to discuss the situation in the labour movement. Two or three Georgites made some noisy opposition, whereupon the police charged down in force upon the meeting, clubbing men and women and severely injuring fifty, mostly Socialists, who had been quietly listening.

IT MUST NOT BE.

A succession of meetings have been held during the past month to protest against the infamous sentences of death and imprisonment passed upon the Chicago Anarchists. The largest of these meetings, held at South Place, Oct. 14, was organised by a representative committee of English Socialists—Anarchist and Democratic. A resolution declaring our comrades' condemnation to be an attack upon freedom of speech and public meeting, of vital concern to the working classes all over the world, was enthusiastically and unanimously passed by a crowded audience of English workers. The speakers were the Rev. Stewart Headlam (chairman) of the Guild of St. Matthew, William Morris of the Socialist League, J. Blackwell of the Social Democratic Federation, Annie Besant of the National Secular Society, G. B. Shaw of the Fabian Society, G. Standing of the Radical Federation, Tarleton of the Hammersmith Radical Club, H. George, one of the unemployed workers of London, "Stepniak," the well-known Russian author and revolutionist, and P. Kropotkin and C. M. Wilson of the Freedom Group. A cablegram of sympathy with the agitation of the American workers, was despatched to the *Leader*, New York, during the meeting. Messages of sympathy were received from the Sheffield Socialists and many Radical clubs and workmen's associations.

Other meetings, smaller but no less enthusiastic, have been held by the London Anarchist Groups and Socialist League at the Hall of the Communist Club, by the Hackney Branch of the S. D. F., by the Tower Hamlets Radical Club and Peckham Reform Club, and in the open air at Hoxton, by the Sheffield Socialists, the Clay Cross Socialists, the Scandinavian Workmen's Clubs of London, and by the Dublin Labour League. Resolutions of protest against the sentence and of sympathy with the condemned men have also been passed at the London and country branches of the Socialist League and S. D. F., and at the London Radical Clubs.

News reaches us of similar meetings and expressions of feeling amongst the workers of France, Holland, Italy and Spain. The workmen of the Spanish Anarchist Federation have contributed out of their scanty wages £52, 14s. 4d. for the defence fund.

We hope that these marks of a growing sense amongst the workers that their cause is one and indivisible throughout the world, will give moral support to American Labour in its resistance to this atrocious attempt of the common enemy to terrorise the proletariat into submission to property rule.

A clear and unbiased account of the Chicago trial and the circumstances which gave rise to it, by Eleanor Marx-Aveling and Edward Aveling, is published in *To-Day* for this month, and is to be obtained in leaflet form at 13 Farringdon Road, E.C., price 1d.

A CONTRAST.

DEAR EDITOR,—I beg to call your attention to pages 2 and 5 of the *Pall Mall Gazette* of October 22nd. On page 2, Mr. Samuel Laing gives an account of an Irishman and his family, seven in all, managing to exist on food that cost "2½d. per head per day."

Page 5 contains a statement taken down from the lips of a Mr. Cross, that he had just been to the Zoo to see the newly-imported gorilla, and found that the keepers were tempting the brute's delicate appetite with a 15s. pine-apple "and the finest English hothouse grapes were to follow."

But for the moralising influence of Mr. Morris's play, which I witnessed last Saturday evening, I would suggest the feeding of the lions and tigers through the winter with selections from the Zoological Society and the London Corporation.—Yours disgustedly,
N. F. D.

Annual Subscription one shilling. Post free in England and within the Postal Union one and sixpence.

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

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

"FREEDOM" PUBLICATION FUND.

F. S., 4s. 4d. M., £1. J. M. F., 6d. J. W., 1s.

Continuation of article on Spontaneity, Law and Order in Ireland, Socialist Propaganda, Reviews, etc., held over from want of space.