

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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MONTHLY; ONE PENNY

A PUBLIC MEETING

TO COMMEMORATE THE

COMMUNES OF 1871,

WILL BE HELD BY THE

LONDON ANARCHIST GROUPS,

AT

SOUTH PLACE INSTITUTE

(Close to BROAD STREET and MOORGATE STREET Stations)

On FRIDAY, MARCH 18, 1892, at 8 p.m.

ORDER OF SPEAKERS:

MOWBRAY, TOUZEAU PARRIS, NICHOLL,
LOUISE MICHEL, KROPOTKINE,
TURNER, YANOVSKY, MARSH.

(Admission Free. Collection to Defray Expenses.)

HUNGER! BREAD! WORK!

THESE are the words which were shouted out in Berlin a few days ago by the crowd of starving unemployed men who, following the example of a similar gathering of starving men and women in Paris a little more than a century before, went to pay a visit to their emperor, the young man of 33, who claims God as his ally and does not hesitate to tell the world that he himself is the first and greatest man in Germany. The will of the king is the highest law. That is the first and last of his commandments. He has written it in Latin in the visitors' book at Leipsic, and he has enunciated it in good German in a variety of paraphrases all over Germany; at banquets, at reviews and wherever he has had the opportunity to do a little speechifying. "I am the Boss, and those who do not obey me shall suffer." That is the sum total of the modern Solomon's wisdom. He has the courage of his convictions and certainly we revolutionists have to thank him for that. He is not afraid to say what he thinks. And the ordinary hypocritical supporter of law and order holds up his hands in horror at such "eccentricity." But "whom the gods wish to destroy they first make mad." Whether William is to be destroyed or not remains to be seen. Certainly according to the nineteenth century criterion of a constitutional monarch he is a little "dotty." Perhaps this demonstration may do something towards rousing him. Hunger! Bread! Work! That is the Mene! Mene! Tekel! Upharsin! of the German Belshazzar; nay rather of the existing system of society. They have been tried in the balance and found wanting. Had they shown any disposition to meet the coming crises, the patient multitude would have welcomed them with heartfelt delight. The present horrible condition of society might have been peacefully replaced by a well ordered federation of communities in which there would be happiness for all, the Social Revolution might have been effected without the death of a single individual. But it seems madness to believe this possible now. Every day the feeling of antagonism between the two nations, those who have and those who have not, grows fiercer and the preliminary skirmishes become more frequent. The unemployed of London answer the unemployed of Paris, and the 8th of February in the English metropolis is repeated in the 25th of February at Berlin.

As in the great Trafalgar Square meeting of a few years past, the Berlin unemployed commenced their demonstration with a meeting. Open air meetings not being allowed, it took place in a large hall connected with a drinking saloon. Three thousand persons, it is said, gathered in the hall, but there were crowds outside who were unable to

get admission. The speeches were very mild, much milder than those at the London meeting. The men were told that demonstrations in the streets would lead to serious consequences. One speaker quoted the famous saying of a Prussian minister, "A gun shoots and a sabre cuts." Another referred to one of the Emperor's speeches in which he, like the English Charles who lost his head, objected to emigration. This speaker said the workmen had no intention of emigrating. We have only seen a very meagre report of the speeches, but we suppose the tenor of his remarks was that they intended to stop in Germany and see the thing through. A resolution was adopted of the usual Social Democratic type calling upon the government to start relief works. Cheers for Social Democracy brought the proceedings to a close, as far as the organisers of the meeting were concerned. However, although William thought he had arrested all the men of initiative when he made a raid upon the Anarchists early in the last month, it was very much like the famous capture of Talbot by the French countess which Shakespeare tells us of. What he has under lock and key is comparatively speaking of no account. The Anarchist forces are without the prison walls. Cries of Hunger! Bread! Work! were raised by the desperate starving men, interspersed by directing shouts of: To the Emperor! To the Castle! This happened just as the guard at the palace were to be relieved, and the huge mass fell in behind the handful of soldiers and marched down Unter den Linden singing the "Workman's Marseillaise." Soon the telephone was at work and a large body of police set off "to disperse the mob." Swords were drawn and a charge made, the people retaliating with sticks and the heavy house keys which the Berliners carry about with them. Eventually after numbers were wounded on both sides, the police conquered and a great many arrests were made. Amongst these, it is worthy of note, were several women. Later on, however, just as dusk set in fresh gatherings took place, and a number of butchers, and bakers, shops were broken into, the contents appropriated and the windows smashed. Beershops were also attacked and in many cases the fronts of the shops were demolished. More fighting took place and it was not till midnight that "order was restored."

Meanwhile the unemployed of Vienna are also causing great trepidation to the possessing classes who fear the worst, and in Paris where a Ministerial "crisis" endured for about a week, the need of having a strong man (Constans?) in power on the first of May has been spoken of. Here in "Constitutional" England things are pretty quiet at present. But for how long! The unemployed question still looms threateningly upon the horizon, and who can tell when the starving workers will show their heads again. We hear and read of many bitter experiences. Fortunately for the well-to-do classes the winter is nearly over in England, at any rate that means quiet for them. In the summer the poor take their hard lot calmly and patiently enough. But on the European continent and in America the roar of the coming struggle sounds nearer and nearer. The famine in Russia, and the thousand and one little outbreaks which are taking place there, but which the White Czar's creatures do their best to conceal; the misery through want of work in Germany, Austria, Spain, Italy, and elsewhere; the activity amongst the discontented even in comparatively well-to-do, intensely patriotic France; what does it all mean if not the beginning of the end, the breakdown of militarism and despotism at least, even if it be not the complete emancipation of humanity. What are you doing, friend, whilst all this is going on around you and history is being made under your eyes. Think you it is no concern of yours. Are you repeating to yourself the phrase of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper"? We do not ask you to give your life and your liberty for the cause of human freedom. It is not every man who is prepared to do that. But we do ask you to protest against the powers that be in their schemes of plunder and their tyranny; we do ask you to spread the light to the best of your ability. Whether you are by conviction Anarchist, Social Democrat, Land Nationaliser, or simple Radical, if you are a working man or a working woman, we do ask you to espouse the cause of your fellow-creatures, to study for yourself the reasons for the existence of the present society and to help us to establish in its place a condition of things which will be worthy of intelligent human beings. The present capitalist society based on militarism and brute force, and born of superstition and class rule, is only worthy of man's basest characteristics and is a reflection of them. We much abused Anarchists wish to replace it with a society based upon man's intelligence, his finer feelings, his solidarity with the whole human race. Will you help us?

THE REIGN OF HUNGER.

II.—ITS EFFECTS.

We are hungry. But this universal sense that we are unsatisfied in mind or body, or both, by no means affects all of us in the same way or with a like degree of intensity. He who lacks most is not necessarily he who desires most. On the contrary, the more a man's conditions have allowed his nature to develop, the more unsatisfied he feels when scope for the exercise of his faculties and supply of his needs is denied him. And the more vigorous the nature, the more it fights for opportunity and frets against limitation.

Almost every man, even the most poverty-stricken and oppressed, has, during his youth at least, moments of vitality and expansion, when his whole being revolts against the circumstances or the persons that press upon him, and seem to be the active agents in narrowing his life and depriving it of enjoyment. But such outbursts of energy are but too often merely fitful flashes; the crushing burden of what seems to be inevitable fate settles down upon the spirit, and the rebel sinks into the apathetic slave of routine. If he be poor, he becomes a submissive wage-slave or some other variety of human mechanism, grinding out a livelihood for his family, too often by the exploitation of others, always in competition with them.

“ He seemed a common-place, who tried
A good machine to be ;
The columns of a railway guide
Were not more dull than he.”

Or, if he be well enough endowed with this world's goods to avoid this necessity, the social pressure exercised upon him on all sides quickly diverts his energy into some well-worn channel of money grubbing or favor hunting, fame seeking, fashion or gambling. Soon he becomes a case-hardened Conservative (perhaps of the variety labelled “ Liberal ”), and a pillar of that society which has crushed his highest aspirations and left all his deepest cravings unsatisfied.

It is these slaves of the established order who, whether they be rich or poor, are the main obstacle to any thorough and far-reaching social reform. Not because in their secret hearts they are at all satisfied with things as they are, but because they are in continual dread of “ leaping out of the frying pan into the fire,” or else have become so dead and heavy that they doubt the possibility of leaping at all. In other words, they have no faith in the healthy vitality, the creative energy of human nature, having lost their own. Institutions, customs, are everything to them, men nothing. They dare not trust themselves or others. They feel already so unsatisfied and insecure, that they have no heart to move an inch out of the mechanical round of use and wont, for fear they should lose what little satisfaction in life they have. The narrowly-selfish terrors of the Haves, afraid to lose their grip on power and property, are backed up by the timid, despairing apathy of the Have-nots, afraid to lose their bare existence.

Unhappily, these folks, the people who are blindly afraid of change and the people who are not awake to the actual possibility of any that might help them effectually, still form the majority of our population. And as long as they do so, their want of healthy vitality necessarily finds its counter-part in what is called “ crime.” Thanks to the dull inertia of so many members of the community, the reign of hunger presses beyond all endurance upon the lives of certain individuals. Human nature in them is so squeezed and starved, so consumed by desire and unsatisfied by the harsh view of social co-operation presented to it, or maybe so outraged and flouted, that it can only assert itself by some violently anti-social effort. In the over-strained or deformed condition of the man's mind, the over or under tension of his nerves, his vital energy rushes into the only outlet it can find, protesting by its anti-social fury against the accumulated mass of injustice and cruelty, ignorance and stupidity which have reduced him to such a pass. Hideous as it is, it is as irrational to blame or punish crime* as to blame or punish sickness. Sickness is repulsive, often extremely dangerous, to those around the sufferer, but we recognise it as the needful effort of his nature to throw off something injurious to it. However personally inconvenient his struggle for life may be to ourselves, we can feel only pity for him, with a desire to help him all we can. Whilst at the same time, we, of course, take all needful precautions to prevent him from attacking us in his delirium, spreading infection, and so on. Precautions which, should he recover, he will be the first to approve. Moreover, we recognise that this revolt of the vital energy of the patient, called illness, is not in itself the evil, but an effort to remedy the evil. Modern medical science recognises that if a man is sick or in a fever, the first thing to do is not violently to check the sickness or feverishness, but to put him in the wholesomest conditions possible to aid his system in throwing off, with the least possible effort, the poison of which it is trying to rid itself. And the next thing to do is to discover for our own sakes what the poison is, and how it may be prevented from injuring others. This is the work upon which the hygienists on the one hand and the bacteriologists on the other are just now so largely engaged, completely revolutionising between them the ancient methods of medical treatment, which concentrated all attention upon repressing the symptoms of disease.

A movement of almost precisely analogous nature is taking place in relation to crime. The only idea of the folks it disturbed and frightened used to be to repress the crime. The old repressive system is still in full swing, but there are an increasing number who are thoroughly dissatisfied with it, convinced that it deals with effects, not causes. Crime, like disease, they say, is a phenomenon to be most carefully

studied; it is the violent revolt against an evil, rather than the evil itself.

Most of these students of criminal anthropology, however, seem at present to have only got so far as to recognise that crime is disease; that some of its symptoms are distinctly physical, the criminal being generally a person whose brain and nerves are in an obviously morbid and unnatural state, either temporarily or chronically. The still more important inquiry: “ What are the causes which produce this terrible condition in human beings ? ” has been, as yet, scarcely pursued at all.

To us, as we have said, it seems the inevitable outcome of the Reign of Hunger. Whether the individual has inherited mental incapacity, weakness or deformity, or bodily feebleness from parents whose whole being was squeezed and starved, or whether, inheriting an ordinary amount of vitality and capacity, he has himself been deprived of all healthy opportunity of development, or if at some one period circumstances have pressed upon him unendurably, the evil is fundamentally the same in character. He is a being deprived of the satisfactions his nature craves and mentally thrown out of gear by the misery of that hunger, and his crime is the frantic struggle of that starved and suppressed nature to assert itself and live more fully.

If anyone doubts this, let him notice the careers of criminals, trying to read between the lines in each case the inner life of the man himself. And further let him remark that crime is commonest in communities where the people are the least satisfied; not where they have the least wealth, that is another matter, as we saw in our previous article.

See, for instance, the thievishness and hideous cruelties of those Central African tribes, where the monopoly of private property and trade for individual profit are growing so rapidly, and the people are ground down by the most despotic tyranny; whereas amongst village-communities (*e.g.*, in Java) no better off economically, but living on terms of equality and mutual aid, crime is very rare. Think of the swindling, cheating and bribery reduced to a fine art in America, where monopoly is making such gigantic strides, and contrast the absence of crime in Norway where there is greater equality of possessions and the hunger of the mass of the people is less gnawing, etc., etc.

Crime is like an ill weed that always springs up most plentifully where the soil is poorest; and it has its uses in drawing attention to the state of the ground. But human existence is not so hopelessly penned between the devil and the deep sea that crime or apathetic submission are its only alternatives. Those men and women whose vitality is strong enough to bear up against the pressure of surrounding conditions, those upon whom life is pressing less hardly than the rest, have another outlet before them. They can set themselves to realise the causes why they and their fellows are so wretchedly unsatisfied, and to discover a remedy. That such large numbers of men and women are attempting this is the most encouraging fact in our social life, and some of them, it seems to us, have hit upon the truth, whilst ever increasing numbers are being brought to it by the logic of events.

C. M. W.

(To be continued.)

* By crime we do not, of course, mean *illegal* actions. Many criminals sail within the law or escape through its numberless loopholes whilst law-breakers are often persons innocent of any anti-social intent. Neither, on the other hand, does the present writer (thereby differing from many Anarchists and some previous writers in *Freedom*) include amongst criminals many persons whose conduct appears the most widely hurtful to their fellows, such as capitalists, landlords, soldiers, politicians, judicial functionaries and the like. For this reason. Though one such person as a capitalist employer is the means of inflicting more wide-spread suffering on his fellows than a dozen thieves, yet he has no desire or intention to do so, or idea that he is doing it. On the contrary, he is generally profoundly convinced that he is a most valuable member of society, and that if it were not for his activity in exploitation, and the like activities of others of his sort, the whole country, working classes included, would be far worse off than it is. This is not merely a hypocritical assumption on his part, it lives in his mind as a conviction which is as much part of his mental furniture, as his longing to amass wealth. And not only have his own class and the other propertied classes agreed with him, but the working classes also. It is only quite lately that a portion of them have begun to dare to believe that he is an unnecessary evil, and that they could do without him. We Socialists are convinced that the position he stands in to his fellow-men is wrong, that his claim to the lion's share of the produce is unjust, etc., but neither he nor most of those around him are convinced of it as yet, and as long as he acts as he does openly and by virtue of a tacit agreement amongst his fellows that he has a right to act so, it is a misuse of terms to call him a criminal. The slaveholder of a hundred and fifty years ago was not *per se* a criminal; though if a man tried to keep slaves now he would be committing a real crime, because he would be deliberately putting himself in a relation with his fellows which *he himself* and all around him are agreed in recognising as anti-social. Or again, a man who carries off a woman against her will is a criminal amongst us for the like reason, but it would be a misuse of terms to call an Australian savage who does so a criminal, because such conduct has not yet been recognised as anti-social by him or his fellow-Australians, or even by his victim herself. Some time, very shortly, as we Anarchist-Communists believe, it will doubtless be realised by Englishmen that it is anti-social for man to dominate man or exploit his fellow's labor for his own profit, or compete with them for personal gain, and then it will become criminal for the many to act unsocially in these ways, just as it is already criminal for the few who do already realise this fact. The real *bona-fide* criminal, of whom we are speaking above, knows quite well that he is acting anti-socially, if he is able to think at all. But he does not care, or feels that he cannot help himself, and is justified by circumstances. He feels every man's hand against him and therefore sets his hand against every man, or he is carried away by some overmastering impulse of feeling: revenge, lust, cupidity, or despair, which throws him completely off his balance and banishes all other considerations. There are cases of moral idiocy, but these are very rare. Also cases of moral insanity, when the balance of the moral sense is not temporarily but hopelessly overthrown, but these again are quite exceptional; whereas the cases where the social impulse has been weakened or left undeveloped by external circumstances are most numerous.

ANARCHIST MORALITY.

By P. KROPOTKINE.

(Continued from previous number.)

VI.

Thus, by an unprejudiced observation of the animal kingdom, we reach the conclusion that, wherever society exists at all, this principle may be found: *Treat others as you would like them to treat you under similar circumstances.*

And when we study closely the evolution of the animal world, we, like the zoologist Kessler, and the economist Tchernyshevsky, discover that the aforesaid principle, translated by the one word *Solidarity*, has played an infinitely larger part in the development of the animal kingdom than all the adaptations that have resulted from a struggle between individuals to acquire personal advantages.

It is evident that in human societies a still greater degree of solidarity is to be met with. Even the societies of monkeys highest in the animal scale offer a striking example of practical solidarity, and man has taken a step further in the same direction. This, and this alone, has enabled him to preserve his puny race amid the obstacles cast by nature in his way, and to develop his intelligence.

A careful observation of those primitive societies still remaining at the level of the Stone Age, shows to what a great extent the members of the same community practise solidarity amongst themselves.

This is the reason why the practical solidarity never ceases; no, not during the worst periods of history. Even when temporary circumstances of domination, servitude, exploitation, cause the principle to be disowned, it still lives deep in the thoughts of the many, ready to bring about a strong recoil against evil institutions, a revolution. If it were otherwise, society would perish.

For the vast majority of animals and men, this feeling remains, and must remain, an acquired habit, a principle always present to the mind, even when it is continually ignored in action.

It is the whole evolution of the animal kingdom speaking in us. And this evolution has lasted long, very long; it counts by hundreds of millions of years.

Even if we wished to get rid of it, we could not. It would be easier for a man to accustom himself to walk on all fours, than to get rid of the moral sentiment. It is anterior, in animal evolution, to the upright posture of man.

The moral sense is a natural faculty in us, like the sense of smell or of touch.

As for Law and Religion, which also have preached this principle, they have simply filched it to cloak their own wares, their injunctions for the benefit of the conqueror, the exploiter, the priest. Without this principle of solidarity, the justice of which is so generally recognised, how could they have laid hold on men's minds?

Each of them covered themselves with it as with a garment; like Authority, which made good its position by posing as the protector of the weak against the strong.

By flinging overboard Law, Religion and Authority, mankind regain possession of the moral principle which has been taken from them. Regain, that they may criticise it, and purge it from the adulterations wherewith priest, judge and ruler have poisoned it and are poisoning it yet.

But to deny the moral principle because Church and Law have exploited it, would be as unreasonable as to declare that one would never wash oneself, would eat measly pork, and would object to communal possession of land, because the Koran inculcates daily bathing, because the hygienist Moses forbade swine's flesh to the Hebrews, or because the Shariat (supplement to the Koran) requires that all land lying untilled for three years shall return to the community.

Besides, this principle of treating others as one wishes to be treated oneself, what is it but the very same principle as equality, the fundamental principle of Anarchism? And how can any one manage to believe himself an Anarchist unless he practises it?

We do not wish to be ruled. And, by this very fact, do we not declare that we ourselves wish to rule nobody? We do not wish to be deceived, we wish always to be told nothing but the truth. And, by this very fact, do we not declare that we ourselves do not wish to deceive anybody, that we promise to always tell the truth, nothing but the truth, the whole truth? We do not wish to have the fruits of our labor stolen from us. And, by that very fact, do we not declare that we respect the fruits of others' labor?

By what right, indeed, can we demand that we should be treated in one fashion, reserving it to ourselves to treat others in a fashion entirely different? Are we, perchance, the "white bone" of the Kirghiz, who may treat the rest just as he likes? Our sense of equality revolts at such an idea.

Equality in mutual relations, with the solidarity arising from it, this is the most powerful weapon of the animal world in the struggle for existence. And equality is equity.

By proclaiming ourselves Anarchists, we proclaim beforehand that we disavow any way of treating others in which we should not like them to treat us; that we will no longer tolerate the inequality that has allowed some amongst us to use their strength, their cunning or

their ability after a fashion in which it would annoy us to have such qualities used against ourselves. Equality in all things, the synonym of equity, this is Anarchism in very deed. To the devil with the "white bone," who takes upon himself a right to deceive other folks' simplicity! We do not desire him, and, if need be, we will suppress him. It is not only against the abstract trinity of Law, Religion, and Authority that we declare war. By becoming Anarchists, we declare war against all this wave of deceit, cunning, exploitation, depravity, vice—in a word, inequality—which they have poured into all our hearts. We declare war against their way of acting, against their way of thinking. The governed, the deceived, the exploited, the prostitute wound above all else our sense of equality. It is in the name of equality that we are determined to have no more prostituted, exploited, deceived and governed men and women.

Perhaps it may be said—it has been said sometimes—"But if you think that you must always treat others as you would be treated yourself, what right have you to use force under any circumstances whatsoever? What right have you to level a cannon at any barbarous or civilised invaders of your country? What right have you to dispossess the exploiter? What right to kill not only a tyrant, but a mere viper?"

What right? What do you mean by that singular word, borrowed from the Law? Do you wish to know if I shall feel conscious of having acted well in doing this? If those I esteem will think I have done well? Is this what you ask? If so, the answer is simple.

Yes, certainly! Because we, we ourselves, should ask to be killed, like venomous beasts, if we went to invade Burmese or Zulus, who have done us no harm. We should say to our son or our friend: "Kill me, if I ever take part in the invasion!"

Yes, certainly! Because we, we ourselves, should ask to be dispossessed, if, giving the lie to our principles, we seized upon an inheritance, did it fall from on high, to use it for the exploitation of others.

Yes, certainly! Because any man with a heart asks beforehand that he may be slain, if ever he becomes venomous; that a dagger may be plunged into his heart, if ever he should take the place of a dethroned tyrant.

Ninety-nine men out of a hundred, who have a wife and children, would try to commit suicide, for fear they should do harm to those they love, if they felt themselves going mad, *i.e.*, losing cerebral control of their actions. Whenever a good hearted man feels himself becoming dangerous to those he loves, he wishes to die before he is so.

One day, at Irkutsk, a Polish doctor and a photographer were bitten by a mad dog. The photographer seared his wound with red hot iron, the doctor simply applied caustic to his. He was young, handsome, overflowing with life. He had just left the convict prison, to which the government had condemned him for devotion to the people's cause. Strong in learning and above all in intelligence, he effected marvellous cures; the sick worshipped him.

Six weeks later, he noticed that the bitten arm began to swell. He, being a doctor, could not mistake what this meant; the madness of hydrophobia would follow. He hurried to a friend, a doctor and exile like himself: "Some strychnine! Quick, I entreat you. You see this arm; do you know what it is? In an hour or less the madness will seize me, I shall try to bite you, you and my other friends. Lose no time! Some strychnine! I must die."

He felt himself becoming dangerous: he asked to be killed. The friend hesitated; he wished to try some treatment for rabies. With the help of a brave woman, he began—but two hours later the young doctor flew at them, foaming, and tried to bite them; then he became himself once more, and again asked for strychnine, but the rabid fit returned. He died in terrible convulsions.

How many facts of a like nature could we not cite from our own experience! The man of heart would rather die than become a cause of evil to others. And this is why he will feel conscious of having done well, and why the approval of those he esteems will follow him, when he kills a viper or a tyrant.

Perovskaya and her comrades killed the Russian Tzar. And all mankind, despite the repugnance to the spilling of blood, despite the sympathy for one who had allowed the serfs to be liberated, recognised their right to do as they did. Why? Not because the act was generally recognised as *useful*; two out of three still doubt if it were so; but because it was felt that not for all the gold in the world would Perovskaya and her comrades have consented to become tyrants themselves. Even those who know nothing of the drama are certain that it was no youthful bravado, no palace conspiracy, no attempt to gain power; it was hatred of tyranny, even to the scorn of self, even to the death.

"These men and women," it was said, "had conquered the right to kill"; as it was said of Louise Michel, "*She had the right to rob*"; or again, "*They have the right to steal*," in speaking of those terrorists who lived on dry bread, and stole a million or two of the Kishineff treasure, taking, at their own peril, all possible precautions to free the sentinel, who guarded the wealth with fixed bayonet, from all responsibility.

Mankind have never refused the right to use force to those who have conquered that right, be it exercised upon the barricades or in the shadow of a cross-way. But if such an act is to produce a deep impression upon men's minds, *the right must be conquered.* Without

this, such an act, whether useful or no, will remain merely a brutal fact, of no importance in the progress of ideas. Folks will see in it nothing but a displacement of force, simply the substitution of one exploiter for another.

(To be continued.)

FREEDOM.

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NOTES.

THE FIRST OF MAY.

A comrade writes:—"I don't know what other sections of the Socialist party will do in England; but I think Anarchists should know what they may do. On the continent the prospects are this year very different from one country to another, and uncertain. In Spain, of course, there will probably be not much of revolt, although we cannot know. In Italy, the unemployed agitation, which is taking everywhere a decided Anarchist character, may have become very accentuated at that time. Belgium looks like the country where there will be most trouble: the State Socialists have just held a congress at Brussels with a view to turn the 1st May agitation into a demonstration for the universal suffrage. Three opinions were manifested at the congress: the Brussels head-quarters of the Labor Party proposed a big demonstration at Brussels for the universal suffrage; the Flemish section of the Labor Party (Anseele & Co.) was rather opposed to such a demonstration, but still more to the general strike; which latter idea, however, was supported by the bulk of provincial delegates. At last the proposal for the Brussels demonstration was withdrawn, and the idea of the general strike accepted, but—without determination of the date. Yet the situation in Belgium is very grave, as the miners have their wages continually reduced; and a general strike in Belgium, including a miners' strike (the miners being the promoters of the movement), would perhaps provoke like strikes in Germany and in a part of France. Such being the situation, it is for the Anarchists of all countries, therefore also of England, to try and do their best to further the movement. The Anarchists in every locality could invite the workmen's clubs and unions etc. to meet together and take such steps as they think convenient." This is a matter for comrades who are trade unionists especially to take in hand.

THE ANARCHIST MOVEMENT IN SPAIN.

"Referring to the preparations of the Socialists and Anarchists of all countries to celebrate the 1st May, the Minister of Public Works says that the government, which of late has been content to disperse the Anarchists, has resolved henceforth to decimate them." (*Times*, 5 Feb.) It began by strangling Zarzuela, Lamella, Busiqui and Lebrijano on Feb. 10th, for their share in the Xeres revolt. The Barcelona Anarchists retorted by an explosion on the Plaza Real the same evening, while the Carpenters Association draped their quarters in black. The police tore down the draperies, with their inscription "In honour of the victims of Xeres," and arrested 8 workmen within the house; 18 persons were arrested during the night, and it is reported that two more bombs were found by the police. The magistrates have refused bail. On Feb. 14th, a meeting of 500 out of works at San Pedro d'Arena sent greetings to the Anarchist prisoners at Xeres and all workingmen in trouble for 1st of May agitation.

Before the execution of the four Xeres Anarchists, large numbers of Barcelona workmen left work and held a meeting to protest against the sentence; they were attacked by the police and one woman severely wounded. One man fired on the police. The operatives of the woollen factories have struck, and three Anarchists have been arrested on suspicion of having instigated the strike.

We hear from a trustworthy source that Andalusian workers are turning a deaf ear to the suggestion of shorter hours of labor and better wages: We want to be our own masters, they say, and we intend to be so soon. Lately some men went out on strike at Bilbao simply to protest against the discharge of some fellow-workers on the ground of age.

THE 'ECHO' ON THE SITUATION.

"Similar social conditions exist in Spain to those which prevail in this country," writes the "Echo" in its leader for Feb. 11th. "We see, on

the one side, colossal wealth accompanied by boundless waste; we see, on the other hand, men and women and children weltering in woe occasioned by want. Such a state of things cannot and ought not to exist. It is a huge crime against humanity. The Anarchists are in violent revolt against this man-destroying, God-defying arrangement." Most true; but the "Echo" is greatly mistaken in supposing that the Anarchists trust merely to physical force to overturn it. They believe that physical force is justifiable, when one is driven to it as the only available means of protest and self-defence, but physical force undirected by ideas and by a spirit of humanity is "worse than a crime—it is a folly." The whole energy of Anarchist propaganda is directed to the spread of freer and more social ideas of human co-operation than now rule our lives. And to say that Anarchists underrate the force of ideas is to proclaim ignorance of what Anarchism means.

OUR GOOD FRIENDS THE POLICE.

"During the last Walsall police plots," says a correspondent, "the London police have been busy finding out where our comrades work. Having done this, they write anonymous letters to, or even call in person upon, the employers and tell them that their employee so-and-so 'is a dangerous character' and connected with the lowest clubs in London. Several Scotch, Russian and Italian comrades have lost their work in this manner. One comrade whose 'boss' had been visited by them got off satisfactorily; the boss being in sympathy with Anarchy of the Mutualist type, he told the detective that an Anarchist was not so dangerous in his opinion as a policeman."

GROUND LANDLORDS.

London is being agitated now by the Radical papers in a campaign against ground landlords. The result of their agitation, if successful, will not benefit the workers. They propose to nationalise or municipalise the land, but not the buildings. It seems to us that the person who will gain will be the present middleman-landlord, the house-farmer. He will have less or no ground rent to pay, but catch him lowering the rent to the individual tenants.

THE CHICAGO ANARCHISTS.

An attempt has been made to obtain the release of Fielden and Schwab, by raising a technical point of law before the Supreme Court of the United States. Benjamin F. Butler, the barrister who took an active part in our comrades' trial and published an able pamphlet in their defence, and Moses Salomon, who was their lawyer from the very beginning, are conducting the case, and Butler made an eloquent speech before the Court at Washington, on Jan. 26. The imprisonment of Fielden and Schwab is, he contended, illegal, because every precedent of American and English law demanded that on the commutation of their death sentence by the Governor of Illinois, they should be personally brought into Court, formally re-sentenced and allowed to state any plea they might have against it; but this was not done. Butler's long and learned argument was listened to with eager attention. The result we have not yet heard. The Court was crowded, and amongst those present was the foreman of the jury who condemned the Chicago Anarchists to death.

The "Chicago Daily Press" is urging Governor Fifer's refusal last year to pardon Neebe as a reason against his re-election as Governor of Illinois.

A monument to the five martyrs is being erected in the Waldheim Cemetery. It is to be unveiled in the summer of 1893, during the great Chicago Exhibition.

THE NEW SHAKESPEARE.

An emended edition of the "divine Williams'" plays is in preparation, so that it may be ready for the perusal of our young men and maidens under State-Socialism. Our readers who were at the Fabian debate on "Woman under Socialism" will see by the following sample that the poet will not be so much Bowdlerised as Fabianised:

"Romeo and Juliet," Act III., Sc. 2. Enter Juliet.

"Come gentle night: come loving, black-browed night,
Give me my Romeo: but I first must ask
The parish guardians and Commissioners:
For should I have a babe without consent,
I'd lose my vote beside my maidenhood—
My vote, my woman's suffrage, my dear right—
For County Council and the School Board too,
And, worst of all, the Imperial Parliament.
But, having won the State's certificate
Of fitness for maternity, I'll bid
A long farewell to apprehensions vague;
For then my Romeo needs must pay me down
One pound a week for labor in his house
According to our contract: and the State
Will in due time reward me handsomely
For due production of commodities
By way of children, which the State itself
Will nurture up and educate beside
Without my care. Therefore farewell to fears!
O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
But not possessed it; that, I do submit,
Is breach of contract. O, here comes my nurse."—

WALSALL.

THE inquiry before the Walsall magistrates as to whether the six Anarchists, Deakin, Westley, Ditchfield, Charles, Caile and Batolla were or were not "in possession of explosives" and "engaged in a conspiracy to do an unlawful act," between November 1st, 1891, and Jan. 7th, 1892, was concluded on Feb. 15th. All six prisoners were committed for trial at the next Stafford Assizes, which will come on about the middle of this month. Our comrades have reserved their defence; so that, setting aside the statements obtained under very dubious circumstances by the police from Ditchfield and Deakin, nothing is at present known except the police evidence, together with the light thrown upon it by Mr. Thompson's cross-examination of Taylor, chief inspector at Walsall, and Melville, an inspector in the London detective force.

It will be remembered that Young, the barrister prosecuting on behalf of the Treasury, started by informing the bench that "the authorities had received information of a wide-spread conspiracy in all the towns of England." It was on the plea of the desperately serious nature of this conspiracy that he overawed the magistrates into refusing bail, and consenting to remands which have kept the prisoners in Stafford gaol or the wretched lock-up at Walsall, from Jan. 7th to Feb. 15th. During these five weeks the businesses of Ditchfield and Westley, both married men, have been ruined, Deakin and Charles have lost their situations, and Battola and Caile their work, all of them and their friends have been put to heavy legal and other expenses, to say nothing of the prolonged mental distress and the injury to the prisoners' health; but in all this time and at all this cost to so many persons and to the country, the authorities have not been able to bring forward one iota of evidence as to the existence of the portentous plots they talked of.

All that the police have succeeded in proving is: that the prisoners were more or less known to one another; that some of them were members of a Socialist Club at Walsall, founded on the principles of the Social Democratic Federation; that a heap of mortar, hair and sand (most unsuitable materials for casting say the experts) was lying in the Club cellar; and that some safety fuse (a very common article in those parts) was found in the room at the Club where Caile was sleeping; that Ditchfield had a plaster cast in his shop, openly lying about and used by his child to dress up for a doll, but, conceivably a model for a bomb; *item* a brass screw bolt which he gave the police himself, explaining that it belonged to what he believed was a lubricator; that Bullock, the iron-founder, had received an order for three dozen castings, according to a lead pattern, which order seemed to him nothing unusual in the way of trade; that the letter concerning these was, though signed Laplace, written in hands resembling those of Charles and Westley and sent, with the patterns, by Westley's boy; that a lead bolt was found in Charles' bag; finally, that in the same bag, amongst a number of papers and literature of all sorts, a drawing of a bomb and certain remarks on making it were found. The experts called as witnesses decline to swear that the models were for bombs. The prisoners are committed on a "might have been." As Mr. Thompson remarked, Mr. Young's "wide-spreading conspiracy" has resolved itself into the possession of a few trumpery castings.

The police have tried to bolster up the case by reading out translations of the most sensational passages they could pick out in the foreign revolutionary literature they found amongst Caile's and Charles' things. Also, by arresting one Carvagna, an innocent Switzer of Liberal Unionist opinions and an inventive turn of mind, who has for many years been a ratepayer at Handsworth, Birmingham. He has devised a method of coping with the Australian rabbit pest by means of bombs, and on discovering that he had a provisional order for his experiments, the police were forced ignominiously to let him go. The notorious John McCormick also cost them a bitter disappointment. With his hints of thrilling dynamite disclosures he deluded them into bringing him from Hinckley and keeping him some weeks at Walsall at 2s. a-day. When their credulity at last failed, he went off to Birmingham, and further covered them with glory by getting run in there as drunk and disorderly, and telling the magistrates that he was employed by Scotland Yard to get evidence against the Anarchists. He had "worked hard for the police, as Inspector Melville of Scotland Yard could testify." He got the money for his drink by gammoning the *Daily Argus* with an outrageous dynamite article.

These and various other unpleasant admissions; *e.g.*, that they had searched the prisoner's houses and the Club without a warrant, though even the Explosives Act only authorises this when danger to life is to be apprehended, were extorted from the squirming police by Mr. Thompson, the barrister whom the London Defence Committee were able to engage for the last two days of the inquiry. "In cross-examination by Mr. Thomson the witness (Melville) said; He had some experience in these cases. He was in the Gallagher case, in which he met a man named Curtin (later on he admitted that he had told Ditchfield that Curtin was in penal servitude *really for not telling what he knew* about a dynamite case.) He had not been engaged in any cases abroad, but he had made inquiries abroad as to foreigners, but *not for foreign Governments*. Amongst the foreigners he had enquired about was not one named Coulon. He knew a man of that name who was a well-known Anarchist. He had been in company with Coulon, but not at Scotland Yard. To his knowledge Coulon had never been there. He would not swear that he had never given Coulon anything to do for him, but he did not remember doing so. He would not swear that he had not paid Coulon any money, for *he had paid lots of Anarchists money*. Mr. Thompson: Have you paid *him* any money?" The witness appealed to the Bench if he need answer. The Government prose-

cutor said questions merely to get at the informer's name could not be put. "Mr. Thompson: My theory is that any suspicious element in this case is the work of this Coulon, who is an agent of the police—(applause)."

The Mayor, after rebuking the applause, said, "on the ground of public duty, the question should not be answered." At the next sitting Melville admitted under Mr. Thompson's cross-examination that he had "made no further inquiries as to the man Coulon mentioned in Deakin's statement. Mr. Thompson: If I give you the address will you act upon the information?"

Melville: What do you mean?

Mr. T.: In other words, will you arrest him?"

The Magistrates' Clerk objected to this as an inadmissible question. (*Walsall Observer*, Feb. 13 and Feb. 20.)

On February 18th, Cunninghame Graham asked the Home Secretary about the rabbit bombs and also if *agents provocateurs* had been employed in the Walsall affair. Matthews acknowledged the Cavagna fiasco, but said that the employment of *agents provocateurs* by the police was not only not sanctioned, it was forbidden; there was no foundation for Mr. Graham's question.

Even non-Anarchist readers will agree with us that under such circumstances as the above the Walsall Anarchists ought to be defended and the truth about the action of the police brought to light. The prisoners cannot defend themselves, as it is doubtful if any of them will be able to manage the prohibitive bail to which, at last, they are admitted: £1000 each, and £500 each from two sureties for each prisoner. In prison they cannot collect evidence or make any effective preparation to meet accusations supported by all the evidence the wealth and power of the Government can command. A defence committee has been formed in London and at Sheffield; the latter engaged Mr. Holmes Gore of Bristol to defend Charles before the magistrates. The London Defence Committee hope to engage Mr. Thompson as counsel for the prisoners during the trial. Funds are urgently needed. Contributions may be sent to the *Freedom or Commonwealth* office, or to the Hon. Treasurer, Edward Carpenter, Holmesfield, near Sheffield.

EQUAL FREEDOM AND BLACKLEGS.

A REPLY.*

"CAN we reach equal freedom by a system of limitations, by preaching 'hands off'?" On the face of it, I think, the question admits of but one reply. Yes, certainly. Self-evidently, it is only by a policy of "hands off" that we shall ever be able to reach any kind of freedom, for where is the freedom in a system of interference? The doctrine of "hands off" does not mean non-resistance, at least, not in my opinion; but it does mean that you shall not be the first to employ violence. This doctrine of "hands off," this "system of limitations," instead of limiting freedom, as my critic seems to suppose it does, appears rather to give it an extension he scarcely seems prepared to admit to be expedient. "The little circle drawn round each, diminishing as the population grows, within which the individual has absolute liberty of action," is hardly well conceived, and is doubtfully involved in the principle of equal freedom. But, admitting that it is, "the little circle" evidently includes too much to satisfy my commentator. If I had formed such a conception, the "little circle" would have included, not the actions which a person *MAY* perform, for these are probably illimitable in number and in kind, but those which he *MAY NOT* perform; and in this sense the circle apparently is too small to suit the writer of "Equal Freedom"!

An individual dwelling alone has absolute liberty to dispose of himself as he thinks fit, so far as the intervention of any other person is concerned. When individual No. 2 arrives, supposing him to practise the "hands off" doctrine, No. 1 has no less liberty than before. He can, probably—if he likes—continue the same round of occupations which characterised his solitary mode of life. But the co-operation of two individuals renders possible the carrying out of many projects and the performance of many acts which did not stand within the ability of one alone.

The division of labor greatly increases the product, and the two are more than twice as wealthy than the one would be. In addition to this, the intercourse of one with the other is itself an additional satisfaction. Thus, as population increases and association becomes more and more intimate, the numbers of the acts and the kinds of satisfaction are ever tending to enlarge.

The doctrine of "hands off" does not mean abstention from useful wealth-producing and pleasure-giving co-operation voluntarily entered into; it does not mean that the individual should be satisfied to withdraw within himself and live exclusively in a little world of his own, as my objector seems to imagine. These are not the kinds of actions I wish to confine within the limits of any circle, small or great. To the development of the individual and to his self-realisation, so long as he keeps violent hands off other individuals, I wish to place no limits. The only limit which I hold the principle of equal liberty places upon human action is that it shall not take the form of physical violence offered to the person; a position which could not be more aptly summed up than in the term "hands off." The principle that no force must be used so long as none is offered is simplicity itself. It allows all the liberty to the individual that is consistent with the liberty of others; its only fault, as it seems to me, is that, to the writer in *Freedom*, it allows the individual too much liberty. Having settled, then, this one condition to realisation of equal freedom (for this is the way I prefer to look

* To the article on "Equal Freedom" in *Freedom* for December, 1891.

at it), it simply remains to consider whether, in any given case, actual violence to the person is offered or not. On this view therefore the introduction of labor-saving machinery, of cabs into London, and of blacklegism are kinds of actions which must be allowed, for in not one of these cases is direct violence offered to the person; they all conform to this one condition of equal freedom or, as may be said, they lie within the limits of equal freedom, or they lie outside that small circle of prohibitory actions which overstep those limits.

"If any man invents, or works, or associates, or does not associate himself with others in such a manner as callously or deliberately to take his fellow men's opportunities from them, and leave social feeling out of his conduct, most assuredly he does not know what personal freedom means." Not necessarily so, however. Callous he may be, but he possibly possesses a very lively sense of equal rights; for, may we not imagine him for example reasoning somewhat as follows:—"Have I not as good right to the job as any other man, and, if he will not take it, what right has he to prevent me?"—a course of reasoning the fallacy of which I fail to see. As to social feeling or the want of it, I fear there is but little to choose between the blackleg and the unionist; each is struggling for his own interest, and the one, so far as I see, is but little better or worse than the other. If the strike wins, the blackleg starves; if the strike fails, the unionist starves; somebody apparently has got to starve in either case. Of course it is a wretched state of affairs, but I am afraid it will not be mended either by breaking machinery or breaking one another's heads. If it is a strike that is going to put things right, it has simply to be made large enough to render the employment of blacklegs ineffectual. What is wanted is that industry, agricultural and manufacturing, shall be so arranged as to provide for the employment of every one—that none shall be able to say he is shut out from all opportunities to labor. Until such arrangements can be made (not necessarily by purely peaceful means), it seems to me, we have simply to obey the moral law as between ourselves and offer no violence, on we must engage in a hand to hand struggle for existence in which neither morality nor Anarchism can have any place. C. P.

One Christian Thomas, who died in 1728, defined the three degrees of conduct as follows:—"1. Justice—Do not to others what thou wouldst not that others should do to thee; 2. Decorum—As thou wouldst that others should do to thee, do thou even so to them; 3. Honesty—As thou wouldst that others should do to themselves, do thou also thyself." It seems to us that C. P. is inclined to stop at "Justice," but that if Anarchist Communism is to be a reality, it must be based on the "Decorum" and "Honesty" of Thomas's quaint definition. Certainly we cannot agree with C. P. that abstain from personal violence is allow each equal freedom. Violence is by no means the only or always the most cruel wrong one man may do another; it is not the wrong done by the capitalist to the wage-workers to-day, but what Socialist will deny that they are wronged and most cruelly? Then again, we deny that there is any action which always and everywhere a man "may not perform" and think it as impossible to compose a negative as a positive table of moral regulations. We accused the philosophical radicals of drawing little circles and C. P. of the inclination to do the like, but assuredly we have no intention to draw them ourselves.—Ed.

A N A R C H Y.

BY ENRICO MALATESTA.

(Continued from previous number.)

The real being is the man, the individual; society or the collectivity, and the State or government which professes to represent it, if not hollow abstractions, can be nothing else than aggregates of individuals. And it is within the individual organism that all thoughts and all human action necessarily have their origin. Originally individual, they become collective thoughts and actions, when shared in common by many individuals. Social action, then, is not the negation, nor the compliment of individual initiative, but it is the sum total of the initiatives, thoughts and actions of all the individuals composing society: a result which, other things equal, is more or less great according as the individual forces tend towards the same aim, or are divergent and opposed. If, on the other hand, as the authoritarians make out, by social action is meant governmental action, then it is again the result of individual forces, but only of those individuals who either form part of the government or by virtue of their position are enabled to influence the conduct of the government.

Thus, in the contest of centuries between liberty and authority, or, in other words, between social equality and social castes, the question at issue has not really been the relations between society and the individual, nor the increase of individual independence at the cost of social control, or *vice versa*. Rather it has had to do with preventing any one individual from oppressing the others; with giving to everyone the same rights and the same means of action. It has had to do with substituting the initiative of all, which must naturally result in the advantage of all, for the initiative of the few, which necessarily results in the suppression of all the others. It is always, in short, the question of putting an end to the domination and exploitation of man by man in such a way that all are interested in the common welfare, and that the individual force of each, instead of oppressing, combating or suppressing others, will find the possibility of complete development, and every one will seek to associate with others for the greater advantage of all.

From what we have said, it follows that the existence of a government, even upon the hypothesis that the ideal government of authoritarian Socialists were possible, far from producing an increase of productive force, would immensely diminish it, because the government would restrict initiative to the few. It would give these few the right to do all things, without being able, of course, to endow them with the knowledge or understanding of all things.

In fact, if you divest legislation and all the operations of government of what is intended to protect the privileged, and what represents the wishes of the privileged classes alone, nothing remains but the aggregate of individual governors. "The State," says Sismondi, "is always a conservative power that authorises, regulates and organises the conquests of progress (and history testifies that it applies them to the profit of its own and the other privileged classes) but never does it inaugurate them. New ideas always originate from beneath, are conceived in the foundations of society, and then, when divulged, they become opinion and grow. But they must always meet on their path, and combat the constituted powers of tradition, custom, privilege and error."

In order to understand how society could exist without a government, it is sufficient to turn our attention for a short space to what actually goes on in our present society. We shall see that in reality the most important social functions are fulfilled even now-a-days outside the intervention of government. Also that government only interferes to exploit the masses, or defend the privileged, or, lastly, to sanction, most unnecessarily, all that has been done without its aid, often in spite of and in opposition to it. Men work, exchange, study, travel, follow as they choose the current rules of morality, or hygiene; they profit by the progress of science and art, have numberless mutual interests without ever feeling the need of any one to direct them how to conduct themselves in regard to these matters. On the contrary, it is just those things in which there is no governmental interference that prosper best, and that give rise to the least contention, being unconsciously adapted to the wish of all in the way found most useful and agreeable.

Nor is government more necessary in the case of large undertakings, or for those public services which require the constant co-operation of many people of different conditions and countries. Thousands of these undertakings are even now the work of voluntarily formed associations. And these are, by the acknowledgement of every one, the undertakings which succeed the best. Nor do we refer to the associations of capitalists, organised by means of exploitation, although even they show capabilities and powers of free association, which may extend *ad libitum* until it embraces all the peoples of all lands, and includes the widest and most varying interests. But we speak rather of those associations inspired by the love of humanity, or by the passion for knowledge, or even simply by the desire for amusement and love of applause, as these better represent such grouping as will exist in a society where, private property and internal strife between men being abolished, each will find his interests synonymous with the interests of every one else, and his greatest satisfaction in doing good and pleasing others. Scientific societies and congresses, international life-boat and Red Cross associations etc., laborers' unions, peace societies, volunteers who hasten to the rescue at times of great public calamity are all examples, among thousands, of that power of the spirit of association, which always shows itself when a need arises, or an enthusiasm takes hold, and the means do not fail. That voluntary associations do not cover the world, and do not embrace every branch of material and moral activity is the fault of the obstacles placed in their way by governments, of the antagonisms created by the possession of private property, and of the impotence and degradation to which the monopolising of wealth on the part of the few reduces the majority of mankind.

The government takes charge, for instance, of the postal and telegraphic services. But in what way does it really assist them? When the people are in such a condition as to be able to enjoy, and feel the need of such services they will think about organising them, and the man with the necessary technical knowledge will not require a certificate from government to enable him to set to work. The more general and urgent the need, the more volunteers will offer to satisfy it. Would the people have the ability necessary to provide and distribute provisions? Oh! never fear, they will not die of hunger, waiting for a government to pass laws on the subject. Wherever a government exists, it must wait until the people have first organised everything, and then come with its laws to sanction and exploit that which has been already done. It is evident that private interest is the great motive for all activity. That being so, when the interest of every one becomes the interest of each (and it necessarily will become so as soon as private property is abolished) then all will be active. And if now they work in the interest of the few, so much the more and so much the better will they work to satisfy the interests of all. It is hard to understand how any one can believe that public services indispensable to social life can be better secured by order of a government than through the workers themselves who by their own choice or by agreement made with others carry them out under the immediate control of all interested.

Certainly in every collective undertaking on a large scale there is need for division of labor, for technical direction, administration, etc. But the authoritarians are merely playing with words, when they deduce a reason for the existence of government, from the very real necessity for organisation of labor. The government, we must repeat, is the aggregate of the individuals who have had given them or have taken the right or the means to make laws, and force the people to

obey them. The administrators, engineers, etc., on the other hand, are men who receive or assume the charge of doing a certain work, and who do it. Government signifies delegation of power, that is, abdication of the initiative and sovereignty of every one into the hands of the few. Administration signifies delegation of work, that is, a charge given and accepted, the free exchange of services founded on free agreement.

A governor is a privileged person, because he has the right to command others, and to avail himself of the force of others to make his own ideas and desires triumph. An administrator or technical director is a worker like others; in a society, of course, where all have equal opportunities of development, and all are, or can be, at the same time intellectual and manual workers; when there are no other differences between men than those derived from diversity of talents, and all work and all social functions give an equal right to the enjoyment of social advantages. The functions of government are, in short, not to be confounded with administrative functions, as they are essentially different. That they are to-day so often confused is entirely on account of the existence of economic and political privilege.

(To be continued.)

THE WOMAN QUESTION AND STATE SOCIALISM.

ON 19th Feb. last, the Fabian Society devoted an evening to the subject of "Women under Socialism." The following accounts by two of our comrades who were present may interest our readers.

Under the two headings of "Socialism and Women," by Mrs. J. G. Grenfell, and "Women under Socialism," by Mrs. D. G. Ritchie, the Fabians, at their meeting on 19th Feb., considered the very important question of woman's position under a socialist regime.

The first of these papers criticised, in an able manner, the ignominious position of woman in the present chaotic condition of society. The lecturer very rightly attributed the special social injustices, under which the sex has for ages suffered, to the fact that she has not been the bread-winner. The cause of her subjection has been primarily economic, and in so far her emancipation depends upon socialistic reform. In common with all other enslaved sections of the community in the present day, only when she is economically free, can she hope to obtain a position of personal independence and social equality with man. Therefore woman's emancipation is a part of the general question of socialism. So far we go with the lecturer entirely, but, when her conclusion is that political franchise will be the means of obtaining this desirable economic freedom, we must entirely disagree. Certain palliations of economic conditions for certain classes of women would no doubt be brought about by such means. But to place all sources and means of obtaining subsistence under the control of a small body of elected governors—even be they the wisest in the land, and representatives in just proportion of both sexes and all classes—this would give us a very poor chance of economic freedom, nay, it would make it as impossible as it is at the present day. The one fundamental difference that such State Socialism could bring about would be that women, together and equally with men, would be subject to a governing body, which would have the right, and inevitably would, make the obtaining of subsistence depend upon whatever conditions they saw fit to lay down. And the despotism so established would necessarily increase with every freshly elected government. For conditions once made law become crystallised obstructions, resisting the growth of better conditions; and never at any time can laws be so framed as to meet all the complicated and intricate possibilities of modern society.

We are led, however, to a nearer view of what this despotism might become in considering the second of the lectures in question, "Women under Socialism," more accurately described as Maternity under Socialism. Mrs. Ritchie starts with the assertion that "economic independence and healthy maternity are incompatible under individualism." By individualism we suppose she means such individualism as we have at the present, that is, individualism *together with a system of special privileges, granted to certain comparatively small sections of society.* If so, she is undoubtedly right, but as the term individualism does not imply so much, the statement is too vague to be accepted. In a society where there were no *specially privileged* individuals, individualism might not be incompatible with economic independence, or healthy maternity. Of course, in any case, the term must be taken in a relative sense, as no society could exist at all under absolute individualism.

But now we pass on to the next and most vital point brought forward; namely, "the State control of maternity, and State support of maternity during a certain period before and after child-birth." In plain words, this means that no child is to be born without the parents having first obtained permission, at some official government department, to have a child! Also, as the lecturer made this proposal include a State control of the hygienic conditions of parentage, the candidates for parentage would have to submit to official examination into the state of their health to obtain the desired permission! Possibly they might, on the occasion of the public celebration of marriage, obtain a permit to have two, four or any other stated number of children, within a stated number of years, according as the wise and far-seeing government had calculated to be good for the community, considering the present material prosperity and the prospect of its probable increase or decrease. Should

the population be increasing faster than the governors approved, the next generation would have to be limited in number. Should it, on the contrary, be decreasing beyond their approval, rewards would have to be offered by the State to induce people to have children!

Now no reasonable person, we imagine, would deny it to be an excellent and desirable thing that the population in any given country or locality should be in a certain proportion to the means of subsistence readily procurable. But could this desirable condition be brought about by no other, more natural and less despotic, means than the one suggested? A people that could be brought to such a state of passive submission and obedience, in such a vital and personal matter, to any official decree would indeed have sunk into a depth of abject slavishness revolting to contemplate. They must have lost every spark of independence, have relinquished their title to individual judgment and control of their actions in the most trifling as well as the most serious matters. They would be lowered to the level of cattle, bred for the use of the community. It is one thing that, with the spread of enlightenment, mankind should learn that, in a society where all individuals are equally free, the interest of the one is the interest of all, and consequently that the natural and ineradicable human instincts will of themselves create conditions under which every individual will be tempted to act in accordance with the general as well as his own particular good. To try by artificial methods to force an individual into acting in all matters in a spirit of submissive obedience to the powers that be rather than from his own initiative and judgment, would be the most demoralising course that could well be imagined. Nothing else, in our opinion, could better reveal the tendency of State Socialism to suppress all individuality and that personal independence which is the root of all liberty.

The latter part of the proposition, namely, that there should be "State support of maternity during a certain period before and after child-birth," seems to us as artificial and undesirable a suggestion, in the way in which it was put, as the first proposition. Under Socialism, we should imagine, that no woman would through marriage become economically dependent upon her husband. And, seeing that the bearing and rearing of children is an absolutely necessary function to most married women so long as the human race is to continue to exist, the fulfilment of such function would be naturally considered in the light of a part of women's share in the duties of citizenship. It would be a strange thing indeed, if when, for their own and future generations' good, women, during certain periods before and after child-birth, would cease to contribute in other ways to the requirements of social life, they should therefore be denied the means of existence! Surely when the bearing of healthy offspring depends on a woman's relaxing or relinquishing for a while her part in the production of wealth, maternity in itself would be looked upon as equivalent to work. But that there should be a special governmental arrangement that women bearing and rearing children, in accordance with all legalised conditions of course, should receive so much for a certain definite period, as the lecture seems to imply, would be as undignified and objectionable an arrangement as one could imagine.

In conclusion, both lecturers, under the impression that women ought to share in the productive labor of the world, seemed to ignore the fact that all useful work that contributes to the well-being and happiness of mankind is in a sense either directly or indirectly productive. The mother who brings children into the world is providing society with future workers, and the woman who cooks a dinner is as much a producer in the scientific sense as the gardener who grows the vegetables, or the butcher who provides the meat. (See Professor Marshall's "Principles of Economics," book II., chap. III., par. 2.) Therefore, whatsoever useful work a woman may do is as much deserving of reward as the useful work of men of whatever kind it may be. Whether a woman's work is in the home, in the old-fashioned established way—so long as she is a worker and not an indulged, useless member of the household—or outside the home, she is a bread-winner, in the sense of being a contributor to the needs of social life, as truly as any man, and consequently the only point of real difference in her position in a Socialist society would be that man would recognise her right, equally with his own, to claim a just share of those things needful to her full, healthy and happy existence.

A. H.

At a recent meeting of the Fabian Society were read two papers on "Woman and Socialism," both very noteworthy as signs of the tendency of a section of Fabians, not indeed to advance slowly, but to proceed backwards, emphasising in the most striking manner the well known evils of State Socialism.

The two leading ideas of those papers were: State regulation of the birth rate, State remuneration of the homework of women.

Now, these ideas are mere deductions from the fundamental principles of State Socialism, which may be stated as: (1) the organisation of production by the State; (2) individual remuneration according to merits.

Were these two principles carried out, there is little doubt that the above stated deductions, however unpalatable and repugnant even to some Fabians and other Social Democrats they may be, would be inevitable. The State, being responsible for the organisation of production and the maintenance of the social standard of life, in other words, being bound to ensure to each and all the satisfaction of certain needs, it would be naturally brought to control the production of children in such a way that the balance between population and means of subsistence should not be disturbed.

Of course, many difficulties would stand in the way of this control—indeed the deduction drawn from the State Socialistic principle of

economic organisation amounts to little less than a *reductio ad absurdum*. The effect of laws, penalties, official investigations etc., would be to further infanticide and vice, and to take away all charm from the relations between the sexes. People would be dragged before the courts to answer charges of over multiplication, just as they are now brought there to answer charges of adultery and breach of promise; and the sensational disclosures would be a source of scandal and immorality much more hurtful to society than the amount of exertion it might submit to in order to feed some supernumerary creatures coming into the world.

Besides, as there are greater individual differences in regard to sexual than in regard to any other human activity, no common law could be enforced; and if resorted to, a system of individual adjustments, an exchange in *bons de procréation* would grow up—like that in *bons de travail*—which would exert a most decidedly demoralising influence on the whole of society. Indeed, the whole thing seems so absurd that we must apologise for having dealt seriously with it.

But, absurd as this idea of State regulation of the birth rate is, the other proposal, of remunerating the home-work of the woman, is still more so. Nay, if it could ever prevail, instead of furthering, as it is meant to do, the emancipation of women, it would simply check it for many centuries to come. Woman's emancipation has to be attained by her rising to the level of man—by acquiring the same independence of manners, by freeing herself from the chains of custom and prejudice, by claiming and asserting her right to live and love freely, and refusing to sell herself for the whole duration of her life to a man's will. Instead of this, we are told that women must become much more than they are now domestic servants; nay, it was actually said in the discussion which followed the reading of the paper, that the man is to be considered as her employer, her master, and the relations between husband and wife should be regulated as those between master and wage-earner, by the law of offer and demand, by the market value of the labor.

It is hardly conceivable that the persons who propound such schemes of "emancipation" for woman have had the slightest regard for the consequences. The husband, being made to pay for his wife's work, would be entitled to claim a certain efficiency, and complain if it were wanting. Every dispute which might arise would have to be settled by some public authority. Just think what, in such circumstances, the family life would become! Man and wife would claim a remuneration for each bit of work done; they would keep an accurate account of the days each might be indisposed or unable to work, and of the very *ration* of bread they would respectively take day by day. The mother, knitting for her baby, or watching at his cradle, or at the bed of her sick husband, would think of the remuneration the work would bring to her. It would be a very unhappy day for mankind in which this fearful dream would be realised, and the "socialistic" society a very sad society to live in. A thousand times better the present state of things, with all its injustices and crimes.

The truth is (and we have indulged in the criticism of the two above-mentioned papers in the hope of showing what appears to us to be a most serious fallacy of the Social Democratic doctrine) that work done for a salary only represents, even in the present debased society, an infinitesimal part of the services men render to each other. The best, the noblest work—and the woman's care for her family belongs to the very noblest—is done without any expectation of remuneration, nay, sometimes in the certainty of earning persecution and opposition instead of gratitude and assistance. The very wage-earner gives his life-blood to a master, not so much for the sake of the few pence he gets for it as in order to take home a slice of bread to his children. His "remuneration" is not so much in the day's wages as in the love of his children, and in the charms of the family-life, as compared with the desperate loneliness of the man only pursuing his own "pecuniary interest."

The mother works for herself as well as for her children and husband; how can the amount of work which she does for her own comfort be distinguished from that which she devotes to the man who ought to be her closest friend? What a series of absurdities the theory of remuneration does lead us to?

Political Economy first contrived to estimate every work, every pleasure, love, vanity, reputation, security in money-value—to make the love of money the motive-power of human conduct—to reduce man to a monster of selfishness and avarice.

After the economists, it was the socialists (Marx and his followers) who tried to measure all kinds of work, manual and mental, by a common standard, in order to enable the Socialist State to "give to everybody the exact amount of his product," to proportionate remuneration exactly to deserts. This principle of remuneration, coupled with the other of an omnipotent State that will help us out of every difficulty, are the most distinctive features of State Socialism.

We Anarchists believe neither in the State nor in the remuneration. We believe that there is but one way out of the present struggle of interest—and this is solidarity, free agreement among people to work and live for each other.

A final difference between us and State Socialism we take to be this: that, whilst we want the material life of the people to be ensured in order that they may enjoy a higher life, intellectual and moral, State Socialists are prepared to sacrifice moral and intellectual life, to maim human nature, in order to feed the people. Their system—at least as it appears in the two papers we have here criticised—may be summed up in two words: bread and prison.—S. M.

THE PROPAGANDA.

REPORTS.

Great Yarmouth.—Acting upon the suggestion of the Conference held at the Hall in Lamb's Conduit Street, on the 25th of last October, several of our comrades have joined the local Trade unions, and new branches are in the course of formation on Anarchist lines. The Bricklayers' Union has been discussing Socialism already, and the subject is also being forced to the front in the Carpenters' and other unions. On Friday Feb. 19th, "Anarchist Communism" was introduced at the Blue Coat Charity Committee, by Headley, Messrs. Smith, Brown and Lee taking part in the discussion. In the Club Room on 7th, there was a good attendance to hear an interesting discussion on "An hour with the Royal Paupers." On the 14th, small attendance, discussion on "Anarchism and Trade Unionism"; on the 21st, "Future methods of propaganda" were discussed. Several new members have joined, and we hope to be in larger premises before we report again. Fair sale of *Freedom*, *Commonweal*, and other literature. Next month we re-commence our open-air propaganda.—J. HEADLEY.

Leicester.—Since our last report we have discontinued our out-door meetings until finer weather sets in, but have distributed this winter, from house to house, a large quantity of Socialist and Anarchist leaflets and papers both in Leicester and the villages for some miles round. In several of these villages this literature is much more eagerly enquired for and read, even by the agricultural labourers than by the Leicester "shoe-hands." Comrades everywhere should not neglect to push the propaganda in the country. Our principles are being debated by most of the "Mutual Improvement Classes" and young men's societies in the town, and several of our Group have been active with addresses and in debate amongst these bodies and in the Clubs.

Newcastle-on-Tyne.—On Sunday, Feb. 14th, at 3.30, T. Pearson lectured at The Open Platform, Rye Hill Chapel, on "Anarchism, its relation to Society and the Individual." A good discussion followed, a great deal of opposition being offered, which was replied to by James and Pearson. On Sunday, Feb. 7, at 7, Dipper lectured at the Socialist Hall, the "Black Bag," on "Socialism and Individualism," replying from the Social Democratic position to G. W. Foote. A good discussion followed, Anarchist and Democratic Socialists taking part. On Sunday February 14, T. Pearson lectured on "Anarchism and Individualism, a reply to G. W. Foote," at the "Black Bag." Discussion followed, the Individualists being again conspicuous by their absence. On Sunday, Feb. 21, at 3.20, at Rye Hill Chapel, T. James opened a discussion on "Free Speech." A resolution was passed protesting against the Government and Police interference with "Free Speech" and right of public meeting, also an expression of sympathy with the Socialists in London and Salvationists in Eastbourne. Meetings have been held every Saturday evening at Lockhart's Cocoa Rooms, 37, Clayton Street, at which papers have been read by Comrades Pearson, C. Porter and F. Kaper. A class has been formed for the study of Herbert Spencer's "Data of Ethics," which meets every Tuesday, 8.30 p.m., at Lockhart's, 37, Clayton Street.

Glasgow.—The weather has prevented our holding some of our open-air meetings, but more work has been done indoors this winter than previously. Comrades Mackay, Joe Burgoyne and Glasier, have lectured to a variety of organisations, such as—Single Taxers, Secularists, Social Democrats, Liberal Associations, and the Labour Army. Good discussions have followed, in which Communism and revolutionary methods have been ably advocated. Our out-door meetings, although not so regular, have been carried on, when weather permitted, with even more than usual vigour. In Comrade M'Laughlan, a new acquisition to the League, we have found an earnest worker for the cause, and a promising speaker, he having on two or three occasions filled the breach at St. George's Cross during Joe Burgoyne's absence. Our Friday night indoor lectures have been fairly successful. On 5th Feb. we made a new departure from our ordinary course, by introducing a Social Night, songs and readings being given by members and friends. Our brave comrade Lebeau contributed largely to the enjoyment of the evening by his spirited and enthusiastic rendering of "La Carmagnole" and the French "Song of the Workers." At the opening of our meeting on 12th Feb., a resolution was unanimously passed, expressing indignation at the infamous garrotting by "martial law" of our four comrades in Spain, and trusting that this example of capitalist vengeance will only serve to rouse the proletariat of Spain to a more irresistible fight for liberty. We were the same night favoured with a lecture from Comrade Glasier on "What is Freedom." A keen and interesting discussion followed.

Aberdeen.—We have given up our indoor Sunday lecture and taken to the open air again. Large meetings held in Castle Street Sunday afternoons and evenings, at which Comrades Addie and Duncan speak. We have made fairly successful collections for our Walsall comrades. Literature sells fairly well. Comrade Duncan at the invitation of the members of the House Painters' Debating Society, again addressed that body and was very well received. A good number of intelligent questions were asked and answered by Duncan with good effect. Much interest is being manifested by several of the leading spirits in the Union in Revolutionary Anarchism; they don't like the philosophical sort.

NOTICES.

LONDON—

Intern. Working Educat. Club, 40 Berner Street, Commercial Road, E.—The following Lectures will be delivered during March, at 8 p.m. Tuesday 1st, D. J. Nicoll, on "Anarchists and Anarchy; Tuesday 8th, A. Marsh, "Anarchism and Social Development;" Tuesday 15th, J. Turner, "The Outcome of Trade Unionism;" Tuesday 22nd, C. Mowbray, "Anarchists and the Labor Movement."

PROVINCES—

Newcastle.—*Anarchist-Communist Propaganda Group.*—Meets every Saturday at 8.30 p.m. in Lockhart's Cocoa Rooms, Room No. 3, 37, Clayton Street. French Class at same place every Monday at 7.30 p.m. Teacher, Francis Kaper. —*National Secular Society*, Eldon Hall, 2, Clayton Street.—Lectures for March: 6th, A. Dawson, "What a Spiritualist believes;" 13th, H. Keppel, "Social Science;" 20th, A. T. Dipper, "Scripture prophecy as a test of truth;" 27th, T. Pearson, "Anarchism and Freethought." To commence at 7 p.m.

Great Yarmouth.—March 6th, in the Club Room, at 8 p.m.: Paul Pry, "From Democrat to Anarchist;" 13th, J. Headley, "Women: Past, Present, and Future;" 20th, "Celebration of the Paris Commune," several speakers; 27th, Discussion: "Is Physical Force necessary for the overthrow of Capitalism."

Aberdeen.—Sunday, Castle Street, 3 and 6.45 p.m. Tuesday, Small Odd Fellows' Hall, 8 p.m.—Sec., Eglan Shepherd, 1 Mitchell Place.