

Freedom

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MONTHLY ; ONE PENNY.

The General Election.

THE strife has begun. Political parties are fighting in this general election mainly for the proud privilege of elevating the working man by methods peculiarly their own. Truly, it should be soothing to our souls to see so much concern shown for those who are poor and oppressed. These humanitarians, who are candidates for the various constituencies, might, if they so wished, ignore the existence of the workers, but no! perish the thought, they feel they have a sacred duty to perform, which professedly just now is to improve the working classes physically, mentally and morally; and this simply means that the workers shall be thrown sops to keep them quiet, and the representatives of the country's wisdom will congratulate themselves that they have done well if they stave off any radical change during their term of office. Filled with the spirit of this beautiful aim, they have come down upon the "free," "enlightened" and "independent" electors with various methods of reform, all of which, if carried out, would leave the worker exactly where he is, but which serve to furnish the legislator with a pretext for political existence for some time to come. Disinterested legislators discuss either the beauty of the Newcastle program or the latest wisdom from Hatfield House. Meanwhile the elector saunters around, hands in pockets, takes no trouble, serenely scans the different programs, chooses what he thinks the best, and awaits beneficial results. It's very nice and comfortable to have all these candidates, from the G.O.M. down, worrying themselves about what is best for you, whilst all you have to do is simply to cross a bit of paper, put it in a box and hey presto! the whole legislative machine is in motion.

After election, to be sure, the activity on your behalf slows down somewhat, but they will not allow your interests to be neglected; they will even sacrifice a Derby day, theoretically; practically—"well there are always some drawbacks, we can't have things as we should like them all at once, and we must come to theory first, the 'thin end of wedge,' you know." "If you cannot have the substance of things," says parliamentary wisdom, "be content with the shadow." Labor too, "rough, horny-handed labor," shall have its voice in the councils of the nation. "Send to parliament men of your own class, who know your wants and the best means of satisfying them," say the Fabians, those friends of the poor, a determined body of men and women who, believing haste to be indecent, march towards the Millennium to slow, very slow music.

In economic knowledge the Fabian Society is monumental. It has issued an election manifesto, clothed in a very imposing red cover. This document, like most other literary emanations from the same source, is rather watery, in fact, its cover is the only revolutionary thing about it, but it may on this occasion serve as the text of a non-voter. It begins by showing how indifferent are the political parties to the wants of the workers, and then the writers allow their sanity to be questioned by advocating the formation of another political party, that of the deified workman who, elevated into the position of legislator, must inevitably tread the same miry paths as those who have preceded him.

In dealing with what the Liberals have or have not done for the workers, the manifesto speaks of the London workman's being "abandoned" by the Liberal party in '87 over the Trafalgar Square business. But this is nonsense; it was not the neglect of the liberals, but want of courage and decision on the part of the workman himself that brought the business to such a lame conclusion, and the conviction forces itself upon one that the workers would be a great deal better off if perpetually "abandoned" by all political parties, since it would teach them a valuable lesson in self-reliance and personal initiative. The Fabians in this manifesto of theirs express some sorrowful surprise over the fact that "not more than fifty in a constituency will take the trouble to attend a ward meeting of the local political association once or twice a year." Precisely so! If the Fabian Society expects anything else, it will find itself grievously mistaken. The parliamentary trick is almost played out, the habit of placing the control of your lives in the hands of a set of individuals, who, however good their intentions, are fallible and likely to err, has only resulted in the worker's being left out in the cold.

"The socialists far outstrip the caucuses in activity." Of course they do, Socialists worthy of the name have something to fight for, something to generate activity, something to get enthusiastic over, but the semi-socialism abroad to-day seems to have found a congenial mate in the political caucus, as is being shown just now in the case of those gentlemen who are ready to dilute their socialism to the requirements of a Liberal or Radical association. The manifesto goes on to state that "the only systematic political education within reach of young working men and women is a socialistic education." Yes, good friends,

but much depends upon what sort of socialism it is, whether free, without "government of man by man," or that of the State. If the latter, it is probable that the young working people about us to-day will, in the course of events, be able to give the Fabians an "eye-opener" by declaring in favor of illegality against their law, immorality against morals, freedom against absurd regulations of human life. The Fabians desire to see the formation of an "Independent Labor Party" the expense of which is to be defrayed by imposing a levy upon each male worker, amounting to "three-halfpence a year, which would furnish, annually, a parliamentary fund of £50,000." But the Fabian Society is grieved to find that the worker "doesn't take on," and proceeds to lecture him on his preference to "horse-racing, pigeon-flying and football," and his willingness to pay for these. It may therefore be deduced that where the worker sees a chance of gaining either physically or intellectually, he is capable of displaying interest and ability. Therefore it is within reasonable bounds to assume that the people feel, intuitively, what a dreary, hopeless sort of method it is this governmental absurdity, ever so far behind the best social aspirations, only existing to sanctify the position of those who live upon the hard toil of others.

As to the "racing, pigeon-flying and football," we question very much whether they are not less demoralising than paying a gang of people to do for you what you can very well do for yourselves, thus furnishing you with an excuse for social inactivity, which brings in its train loss of individuality, independence and self-respect.

Under the heading "Always vote, labor candidate or no labor candidate," comes some advice as to voting for the next best in the field, but we are afraid that this matter is too subtle for us to grasp. We had understood from the manifesto, until we came to this advice, that the policy was to have nothing whatever to do with either political party, Liberal or Tory, but now we are told that when there is no labor candidate **STILL WE MUST VOTE**. Consequently the vote must go to strengthen one of the parties, and yet an "Independent Labor Party" is the thing that's wanted, is it? Perhaps the Fabians will issue fresh instructions to voters upon this matter.

We are also told a little further on that "the propertied classes are retreating before the laboring classes." But it is not the fight of the parliamentary wooden sword and tin trumpet. No! The battle is being fought outside the legislature, out in the cold and bitter struggle between man and master, out in the cruel world of robbery and wrong, in the workshop and the mine, in the blind, fierce contest of the poor against conditions which are sucking all the brightness out of their lives. Your brand new labor member cannot deal with this matter. To fight in this battle a man must enter the ranks of the people, upon common ground, upon terms of social equality, agitating in favor of Anarchy and the free communal life.

Hear what comrade Kropotkin says about the absurd position the law-maker occupies. "Your representative is expected to give an opinion—a vote—on the entire series, varied to infinity, of the questions which may arise in this immense machine—the centralised State. He must vote on the dog-tax and the reform of university education, without ever having put his foot within a university or known what a sporting dog was. He must decide as to the advantages of a magazine rifle, and a site for a government stud farm. He will vote about the foot and mouth disease, guano, tobacco, primary education and the sanitation of towns, about Hong-Kong and Central Africa, and the chimney pots of the Greenwich observatory. He, who has never seen soldiers, except on parade, will distribute an army corps, and without having seen an Indian he will make and unmake laws for India. He will vote for the helmet or the bearskin for soldiers, according to the taste of his wife. He will protect one article and sacrifice another. He will kill the vines in France while trying to save them. He will vote for plantations instead of pasture, and will again protect pasture against forest land. He will ruin some canal for the sake of a railway without ever knowing in what part of the country one or the other is. He will add new articles to the penal code without ever having read it. A Proteus, omniscient and omnipotent, one day a military man, another a pig breeder, by turns banker, academician, cleaner of sewers, physician, astronomer, druggist, stock-broker, or merchant according to the order of the House, he will stop at nothing. Accustomed as he has been in his capacity of barrister, or journalist, or speaker at public meetings, to talk about what he does not understand, he will vote on all these questions, and while in his newspaper he amuses old fogies with his articles, at the assizes he keeps sleepy judges awake with his eloquence, and in the "House" his opinion makes the law for thirty or forty millions of people."

The foregoing aptly describes the absurdity and conceit of the legislator's position we recommend it to the authors of the Fabian Manifesto.

A paying game is this political chicanery to a certain extent. There's plenty of money and wordly advantage in it, a glut of opportunities for the ambitious young man with a polished surface and a maximum of "cheek." For we must confess we never yet knew or heard of anybody wishing to help the workers by parliamentary means without in the end trying to "boss" him. The manifesto concludes by saying that what they have said is all they or any other society can honestly say to the workers. Well, if it is all they have to say, the workers will not be very much benefited by the existence of the Fabians.

And now the Anarchist Communist has a little to say; the advice he gives to the workers is to study the history of all government and they will find that, however good its intentions, it inevitably becomes an obstructive element in social life. We must accustom ourselves to the idea of no rule, no man-made laws, no doing of that by others which we are, or ought to be, able to do for ourselves. Let the worker voluntarily organise for productive purposes in free groups, "voluntarily," because any compulsory organisation has no lasting strength and, and there is no need for any compulsion in the matter as the interdependent condition of the workpeople in the various trades and industries must of itself create a spontaneous organisation. This would be free communal life and the best form of social relationship. No rule of man by man, no voting away of individuality, no authority, no penalties imposed by the "human humbug" the law maker, but a new life, a new morality with the fullest opportunities for physical and mental development.

Furthermore we say: Be no longer the shuttle-cock of party, whether Labor, Socialist or anything else; be not moved into a lunatic enthusiasm over general elections, but regard them as a sad remnant of what we are glad to believe is a decaying superstition. Let the workpeople remember that when they begin to think and act for themselves the law-maker drops into oblivion. He can only exist where dependence and servility are. To the Fabians and their like we say: in spite of university education, try to learn more of the life around you, try to develop the desire for freedom inherent in every human breast. We know too many people who lay more importance upon an "aspirate" being sounded than upon the utterance of the highest truths, if ungrammatically expressed. Be of the people while you may. If you try to rule them, you place yourselves outside their lives, their sympathies and their suffering, and in the time to come you will share the fate of all that is useless and harmful.

REIGN OF HUNGER.

V.—REMEDIES.

IF monopoly, exploitation, domination, resulting in artificial social inequality, are the main causes of our wretched, unsatisfied condition, it can only be remedied by such measures as will check and tend to stamp out these diseases of humanity. From this point of view everything which makes it easier for men individually to hoard wealth they do not need, or to get the better of others, extracting a selfish benefit for themselves out of their loss, or to lord it over their fellows is bad. On the other hand, whatever discourages this, and incites or helps men to create wealth for the common use, or mutually to aid and serve one another, or each to hold in reverence his fellow's freedom of thought, feeling and action is good. This, roughly speaking, is the test by which we try all schemes and methods of reform.

It cannot be too often or too strongly stated that the end we Anarchist Communists have in view is to purify social co-operation, to make it healthier—not to destroy it. No section of the Socialist party recognises more fully than we do that co-operation for existence is essential to the very nature of man, a prime necessity of his development in the future as it has been in the past. And it is because we have such firm faith in the social instincts and inclinations of mankind that we are not afraid to face the destruction of institutions when we believe them harmful. All institutions and methods of co-operating for existence are the outcome of something far deeper and stronger than they: the nature of man himself. It is only to people who look no further than the mere outside of things that it seems as if society—human fellowship and co-operation—would be destroyed if this or that custom or institution were abolished or even altered. Law, government, private property, the family (as an artificially guarded unit), theology, established moral codes and sanctions all may go and yet men will retain the feelings and desires of which these are but perverted or insufficient expressions, will still associate and with and help each other, and come to a common understanding as to how to do it, because this is their nature. Our quarrel with the present society is not because it is social, but because it is still so very partially socialised. We want not to separate men, but to bring them closer together. It is because we believe that law, government, private property are continually working to keep men apart and hostile to each other that we desire the abolition of these elements of discord. We want to get rid of all the elements in the existing method of social co-operation which go to create or keep up an artificial inequality. We want to get rid of the social obstacles which at present make it impossible for each individual to live out his life, to develop healthily and fully his whole nature. Having found out what we believe to be these obstacles, these causes of artificial inequality, the great question for us, one and all, is what steps can we take to clear our social life of them.

This is the one all-absorbing question of our time, asked to-day in every variety of tone by the awakened of all civilised lands. It is the one great aim before which all other objects of interest and pursuit seem tame and secondary. Until this problem is solved there is no rest

for mankind, no peace for society. If we see this, if it is a conviction that has eaten deep into our minds and become a part of our being, we cannot rest until we find out what to do and how it may be done.

To appeal to government, to the parliament or local councils which profess to represent our interest is usually the first idea of the aroused citizen. The machinery may be cumbersome and most unsatisfactory, but it is a power, something which we may hope to set in motion, and how can we poor workers or we few earnest men stir society and move the masses of our fellows, or single-handed uproot the slow growths of centuries.

But, as we have said, one of the main causes of the social inequality under which we are growing is the pernicious inclination of man to rule over man—the unnatural perversion of that energetic force of individual self-assertive will which finds its true and natural outlet in the mastery of adverse non-human forces or the protection of individual dignity against the encroachments of domineering men. Therefore, as we have also said, everything which tends to foster and increase this disease, this perverted tendency, is in itself an evil. For those who understand this the idea that the misery caused by the rule of man by man can be remedied by means of government and authority seems as foolish as the drunkards delusion that his miserable craving is relieved by "a hair of the dog that bit him." As Jesus observed, if Satan cast out Satan his kingdom cannot stand, consequently Satan does nothing of the sort. If his power be invoked against himself, he, being an accomplished humbug, changes his shape merely, but his force remains unbroken. If he is to be conquered, his vital energy must be drained away. In other words, if you want to discourage and put an end to the authority of men over each other, you must boycott government in every convenient way, and do your utmost to divert human energy into another channel. And the way to do this is assuredly not to begin by calling upon the authorities to do this, that and the other, and directing all men's attention to one form of government or another as the most likely means of gaining their ends. The injudicious and time-serving appeals of a certain section of Socialists are likely to end by giving this social evil of government a new lease of life just when men are beginning to realise their folly in putting up with the older forms of it. And all the social changes they want could be brought about both more effectually and more quickly by other and less questionable means. For, after all, social changes cannot be made by authority, they must grow up from the hearts and minds of the masses. What law, what rules, what commands of popularly elected officials can bring about that change in men's inclinations and feelings and thoughts in their whole attitude towards one another, which is implied by the transition from inequality to equality? The problem to be solved to-day is no question for a party or a clique to face and conquer on behalf of the community. It exists in the daily life of all the people, and the mass of the people alone can take effective action in the matter. Political action, therefore, as at present understood, being, firstly, contrary to our principles, to the wider expediency which considers the means to be used always in the light of the end to be attained, and, secondly, being, as we believe, inadequate for the purpose, what are we to do instead?

All great social changes must come from the hearts and minds of the people. The people to-day are hungry and miserable, being driven by pressure of circumstances to revolt somehow. The first thing to do is to rouse them to a consciousness—not of their hunger and misery, of that they are conscious enough—but of the causes of it and, above all, that those causes can be touched, altered, removed by human endeavour. We must rouse others, as we have been roused ourselves, to a sense that this special form of social co-operation amongst the cogs and cranks of which they seem now to be entangled and crushed is no irresponsible machinery, but a voluntary combination of sentient beings, THE CONDITION OF WHICH THOSE BEINGS CAN CHANGE TO-DAY if they set themselves the task and REALISE WHAT CHANGES THEY REALLY DESIRE. If a large proportion of the English people really understood and desired free and equal co-operation amongst themselves, they have the power in their hands to start it at once, in spite of all the landlords and capitalists, governors and soldiers in the country. Not by means of ballot boxes nor by means of dynamite bombs, simply by means of straight, open, manly, united action. For instance, by a general strike, or even a strike in all the leading industries and means of communication, the workers could bring existing industrial machinery to a dead stop. They could render monopoly of capital useless to the capitalist and land valuelss to the landlord. Within a few days they might find themselves virtually masters of the means of labor, able to meet their former employers on equal terms, as fellow citizens, free to join or not such and such a co-operative group, but having no power whatever to hinder their fellows from using the land or any of the instruments of production. No army or police or government could hinder such a movement as this, if it were general and unanimous. All their weapons and discipline and red tape and judicial terrors would be rendered absolutely futile by it. How can they drive back again under the yoke of the old economic system masses of workers who, in every town, every industrial centre all over the country, openly and flatly decline to put a finger to any of that work upon which the daily and hourly life of the whole community depends, unless they do so as their own masters, co-operating with one another on terms of equality, directing their own labor as they think fit, each having an equal claim to the free use of the land and capital required and an equal claim to use what he produces or to decide in common with his fellow workers how it may best be employed. When the men and women of England have the energy, the courage, the intelligence to act like this then the great root causes of the Reign of Hunger will be destroyed.

(To be continued.)

THE CONQUEST OF BREAD*

[In putting before our readers this translation of Elisée Reclus' preface to our comrade Kropotkine's new book "La Conquête du Pain" (The Conquest of Bread) we give what we think will best attract attention to it. Kropotkine's writings never fail to attract; even those who do not agree with his principles are drawn by the light of his vast scientific knowledge and bound by the spell of his beautiful visions for the future of humanity. In these days, when men looking backwards, forwards and inwards dream dreams and see visions of what they fain would be, there are few that have sketched for us Utopias wherein even the majority of us could agree that it would be good to dwell. Among that few is Kropotkine, for amid his hopes for the future—when they are realised—there will be room for the soul of man to grow.]

PETER KROPOTKINE has asked me to write a few words as preface to his book, and I yield to his wish, although I feel somewhat uneasy in doing so. Not being able to add anything to the heap of proof which he quotes in his work, I run the risk of weakening the force of his arguments. But friendship must plead my excuse. Now, when for French "republicans" it is the height of good taste to grovel at the feet of the Tzar, I like to enter into relationship with men of independent spirit, whom he would cause to be beaten with rods, whom he would shut up in the dungeons of a fortress or hang in an obscure courtyard. With friends such as these I forget for a moment the meanness of the renegades who, in their youth, made themselves hoarse shouting "Liberty, liberty!" and who are now striving to wed the tune of the "Marseillaise" with that of "Bojé Tsara Khrani."

Kropotkine's last book, "Words of a Rebel" (Les Parole d'un Révolté), was devoted chiefly to a fiery criticism of middle-class society, at once so cruel and so corrupt. In it he appealed to revolutionary efforts against the State and the capitalist system. His present book, forming a sequel to the "Words," is of a more peaceful nature. It is addressed to those men of good will, who honestly desire to work together for the social transformation, and for them he sketches in bold outlines the features of impending history, which will allow us at last to raise up the human family upon the ruins of banks and governments.

The title of the book, "The Conquest of Bread" (La Conquête du Pain), must be taken in its widest sense, for "man does not live by bread alone." At a time when brave and generous men are trying to change their ideal of social justice into a living reality, we do not limit our ambition to the conquest of bread, even with wine and salt thrown in. We must also conquer all that is needful, or even merely useful, to a life of ease; we must be able to assure to all the full satisfaction of their wants and pleasures. So long as we have not made this primary "conquest," so long as we "have the poor with us," it is a bitter mockery to give the name "society" to an assemblage of human beings who hate and destroy each other like wild beasts shut into an arena.

In the outset of his book the author enumerates the immense riches which humanity already possesses and the prodigious stock of machinery which has been acquired by collective labor. The products of each year would amply suffice to provide all mankind with bread; and if the enormous capital of cities, houses, arable fields, manufactories, means of transport and schools were made communal instead of being held as private property, the comforts of life would be an easy conquest. The forces at our command would be used, not in useless or conflicting labors, but in the production of all that is needful to man for food, lodging, clothing, comfort, the study of science, the culture of art.

However, the reconquest of what belongs to the whole of mankind, in a word, expropriation, can only be carried into effect by means of Anarchist Communism: government must be destroyed, its laws torn up, its morality denied, its officials ignored, work carried on by following one's own initiative and by forming into groups in accordance with affinities, interest, ideas and the nature of the work to be undertaken. This question of expropriation, the most important in the book, is also one of those that the author has treated most in detail, dispassionately and without exaggeration, but with the calmness and clearness of vision requisite for the study of an approaching and inevitable revolution.

After the overthrow of government the groups of emancipated workers, having no longer to trouble about serving monopolists and parasites, will be able to give themselves up to the delightful occupation of labor freely chosen and to scientific methods of agricultural and industrial production, intermingled with leisure devoted to study or to pleasure. The pages which treat of agricultural labor are of chief interest, for they narrate facts upon which experience has already passed judgment, and which it is easy to put in practice everywhere and on a large scale, for the benefit of all instead of for the enriching of the few.

Some humorists speak of the "end of the century" (fin de siècle) in scoffing at the vices and eccentricities of the fashionable youth; but it is a question now of very many other things than the end of a century. We are coming to the end of an epoch, of an era in history. It is the whole civilisation of antiquity that we see coming to an end. The right of might and the whim of authority, the harsh tradition of the Jew and the jurisprudence of the Roman no longer overawe us; we profess a new faith, and from the moment that this faith—which is also a science—becomes that of all those who seek the truth, it will be incorporated in the world of realities; for the first of historic laws is that society models itself upon its ideal. How will the defenders of a superannuated order of things be able to keep it up? They no longer believe; and having no longer either leader or standard they fight at random. Against innovators they have laws and guns, police with batons and parks of artillery; but all of them together cannot give equilibrium to

an idea, and the entire ancient system, based on favour and repression, is destined soon to become in a measure prehistoric.

The impending revolution, however important it may be in the development of humanity, will certainly not differ from former revolutions by making a sudden leap: nature does not act so. But it may be said that, judging by a thousand indications, a thousand profound modifications, the Anarchistic society has been for long while full grown. It shows itself wherever freethought disentangles itself from the letter of dogma, wherever the genius of research ignores old formulas, wherever human will displays itself in independent action, wherever sincere men, rebels against all imposed discipline, unite of their own accord for mutual improvement, and to reconquer jointly, without any master, their share in life and the full satisfaction of their needs. This is Anarchy, even when it is unconsciously so; and it comes to be recognised as such more and more. How can it fail to triumph, since it has its ideal and the courage of its desires, whilst its crowd of adversaries, from this time forth without any belief, bow to fate, crying: "End of the century, end of the century!"

The revolution that is predicted will therefore work itself out, and our friend Kropotkine is only acting on his right as historian in taking up his position on the day of revolution, to set forth his ideas concerning the reconquest of the collective property due to the labor of all, and in making an appeal to the faint-hearted who, though quite well acquainted with the present injustices, dare not themselves act in open revolt against a society to which they are bound by a thousand ties of interest and tradition. They know that law is unrighteous and lying, that the magistrates fawn upon the powerful and oppress the weak; that an upright life and honesty maintained by labor are not always rewarded by the certainty of having a morsel of bread, and that the cynical impudence of the man on 'Change and the cruel greed of the money-lender are better weapons than all the virtues for the "conquest of bread" and an easy life. But instead of guiding their thoughts, wishes, acts and deeds according to their enlightened sense of justice, the greater number flee into some side-alley, from which there is no outlet, to escape the danger of an honest position. Such are the new religionists who, unable to profess the "absurd faith" of their fathers, give themselves up to a pseudo-mysticism of undefined tenets, and go astray in a fog of confused sentiments, becoming spiritualists, members of Red-cross societies, Buddhists or thaumaturgists. Professed disciples of Sakhyamuni, but without taking the trouble to study their master's doctrine, melancholy gentlemen and hysterical ladies pretend to find peace in the annihilation of Nirvana.

And because they never cease to talk of the ideal, these "aesthetes" have no doubts about themselves. We are material creatures and are weak enough, it is true, to think of food, because we often want it millions of our Slavonic brothers, subjects of the Tzar, are in want of it now, and millions of others beside. However, beyond the food, beyond the ease of life and all the collective wealth which may be obtained by opening up the resources of our lands, we see rising up far ahead of us an entirely new world wherein we shall be able to love each other fully and to satisfy this noble passion for the ideal that the ethereal lovers of the beautiful, turning up their noses at material life, call the inextinguishable craving of their soul!

When there are no longer either rich or poor, when the famished man no longer looks with envious eyes on him that is filled, a natural amity will spring up among men, and the the religion of solidarity, stifled now-a-days, will take the place of this vague religion that traces fleeting images on the mists of heaven.

The revolution holds within it more than it promises. It will renew the sources of life, by purifying us from the unclean touch of all politics and by freeing us at last from those base preoccupations concerning money, which poison our existence. Then will everyone be able to follow freely his own inclinations; the worker will do the work that best suits him; the investigator will study without any mental reservations; the artist will no longer prostitute his ideal of beauty to win bread, and thenceforth, friends all round, we shall be able to realise in harmony the great things of which the poets have caught but glimpses.

Then, no doubt, we shall sometimes remember the names of those who by their devoted teachings, paid for by exile or imprisonment, paved the way for the new society. It is of them we think in giving to the world the "Conquest of Bread": they will feel perhaps somewhat strengthened in receiving this testimony of common thought through their prison bars or in foreign lands.

The author will surely approve of my dedicating his book to all those who suffer for the cause, and above all to a beloved friend whose whole life has been one long fight for justice. I need not tell his name: in reading these words of a brother, he will know himself by the throbbing of his heart.

ELISÉE RECLUS.

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NOTES.

A GOOD DEAL OF CRY, BUT HOW MUCH WOOL?

The noise of the General Election is in the air, manifestoes, filled with sanctimonious appeals to the Almighty and the ratepayers, come hurtling through the letter-boxes, and the candidates for Parliamentary honors go foaming and screaming through the country as if the future of the solar system depended on the odd man's vote. It is the high tide of newsvendors, would-be ministers, debating societies, dinners-out, and other bores. After the noise has subsided and the Parliamentary swindle has started on a fresh career, we ask the workers to watch for the good results of the sweating of our State-Socialist friends in the election contest, and to point them out to us—if they discover any.

WHAT OUR GOVERNORS DO PROMISE AND VOW.

As to the promises of the rival parties, to what do they amount? After reading reams of their manifestoes we find that the Tories only talk a lot of vague stuff about the Empire. Now, every honest man knows that the one success of the British Empire has been to extend British vulgarity round the world at considerable expense. Besides, as an East-End workman said the other day, "What's the good of the Empire to me, when I live in a room where I have to open the window before I have space enough to put on my trousers?" The Liberal programme is perhaps a little more definite, but after all the items are but tinkering at the weary old political machine, new dabs of paint on the toy of the privileged classes, the whole being mere repetitions of the eternal failure to make people happy and virtuous by Act of Parliament. If Gladstone's pathetic little sentence, "This is surely the last General Election at which I can expect to solicit your suffrages," were true of the whole gang of politicians, what a good thing it would be for the British public, to be sure!

THE MIRACLE OF THE BALLOT BOX.

The following two verses are quoted from some published by the "Referee," with apologies to the Barrack-room Balladist:—

I struck for better wages, and they said I was a fool,
And the crafty hagitatur merely used me as a tool;
And when the kids was starvin' and we hadn't sup nor bite,
They only shrugged their shoulders and they said it sarved me right.
For it's "Ruin to the country," and its weakedness and crime,
But it's "Sacred Rights o' Labor" just about election time.
Just about election time, my lads, just about election time,
O! it's "Sacred Rights o' Labor" just about election time.

I'm lazy and I'm 'ulking, and a noosance and a cuss,
And I sits on trade and commerce like a blessed inkybus.
I'm a-draggin' down the Hempire and a-swellin' of the rates,
And a 'orney-'anded 'umbug what the hupper classes 'ates.
For it's "Working men are duffers," and "They're never
worth a groat";
But it's "British bone and sinew" when they wants your
blooming vote.
They wants your blooming vote, my lads; they wants your
blooming vote;
O! it's "British bone and sinew" when they wants your
blooming vote.

Strange what transformations of opinion take place during election time; stranger still how short is their duration!

A BOLD ATTEMPT TO CONVERT THE FABIANS.

The minister of the Labor Church, Manchester, came to town on June 24th to see if he could persuade the Fabians to add some hymns

and prayers to their study of economics. He found by experience in his church that they amalgamated very well, but the Fabians did not take to the notion, perhaps because they could not agree as to whether their prayers should be offered up to the Cosmic Forces, First Cause, or to the Law of Rent. Mr. Trevor said they used the old-fashioned word "God" in Manchester, and that it could be made to mean everything and anything. But still his idea did not take, not even when he pointed out that in view of the approaching election it would be well to let the British public know that Socialist and Atheist were not synonymous terms. Some one asked Mr. Trevor to give a sample of the hymns and prayers offered up in the Labor Church, but he did not oblige his audience so far. He said he would be quite willing to pray with the Fabian Society, but he thought the Fabians might not like it. A good point in the church Mr. Trevor runs, is, that the pulpit is open to all, and working-men who have anything to say to their fellows are heartily invited to say it. We hope our Manchester comrades avail themselves of the opportunities the Labour Church offers. Mr. Trevor told us, by-the-bye, that, in his opinion, Bernard Shaw's book, "Quintessence of Socialism," is the most religious book he had ever read, and that Bernard Shaw must be a very religious man, compliments which seemed to rob Mr. Shaw of the power of speech for the evening.

THE DULNESS OF THE COUNTRY UNDER CAPITALISM.

In connection with the article "Anarchism for Rural England" the following extract from the May number of the "Review of Reviews," which quotes from the September "Forum," will be read with interest.

From all rural districts human beings are fleeing to the towns for the sake of society and for all the conveniences which can never be found when people live apart and alone. The only remedy, therefore, for dulness is to bring the dwellings together. In other words, instead of planting your farmsteads at a distance of a couple of miles from each other, making each house an independent establishment, which has to supply everything for itself, the proper thing to do is to gather the farmsteads together into a village, for only by some such method can the agriculturist enjoy some of the advantages of civilisation. I remember, when I was in Russia, discussing this point with Count Tolstoi. He declared that, as usual, the Moujik had divined the right solution to the problem. Nothing can induce the Russian peasant to live on his own plot instead of with others. He always says that it is too dull, and insists upon living in the village, although it may lie a long way from his land.

AN AMERICAN IDEA.

Mr. Bookwalter, in his article quoted above, goes on to say that he thinks that if the farmers in a district five miles square were gathered together into villages it would have a good effect intellectually, physically, socially, and morally. In such a village there would be a village well and a village cistern, a village bathhouse and a village laundry, a village bakery and a village butcher, horse doctor, blacksmith and creamery. One windmill would raise enough water for a hundred families, saving the expense of many windmills and the slavish labor of a hundred women. Washing-day would be abolished, fresh meat would become a possibility, and the village creamery would increase the value of butter and immensely decrease the labor of butter-making. Intellectually such a village would enable the farmers to have village clubs, evening schoolhouses, libraries, music halls, and reading-rooms, to say nothing of a village church, and debating society and general gossip centre. At present such is the revolt of the boys against the intolerable dulness that they will walk miles in the rain and snow to spend half the day in sitting round the stove in the country store. Mr. Bookwalter is preparing to demonstrate how the need that he has pointed out may be supplied, by establishing farm-villages in Nebraska. The first of these will be built on a tract of 12,000 acres in Pawnee County. The land will be divided into 150 farms of 80 acres each, and in the centre of the tract will be a village consisting of 150 houses, one house for every farm.

THE LAW AND THE POET.

The Shelley Society had hoped to celebrate the centenary of Shelley by a performance of "The Cenri" this year, but no theatre could be obtained for the purpose. Those leasees who were sufficiently enlightened men to be willing to lend their theatre were deterred from doing by the fear of having some difficulty over the future renewal of their licence. The Jack-in-office, at whose mercy they are, refused to guarantee that the lender of a theatre would not suffer for his generosity by and by. Wm. Reeves has just published a booklet entitled "Shelley's Principles," by H. S. Salt (price 1s.), which will be of the utmost interest to the admirers and students of the poet "who wished to see the established system of society overthrown from the foundation, with all its superstructure of maxims and forms." Mr. Salt traces the upward growth of public opinion towards the high standard of thought maintained by Shelley in his verse, which at first was regarded as neither rhyme nor reason, then as being good verse but bad morals; the third and last stage to which we have come, being that of complete appreciation.

ANARCHISM IN NEW YORK.

We have received a copy of the first issue of "Solidarity," a fortnightly review of the relations between different sections of the Working Community of the United States and an exponent of Anarchist Socialism, which goes to confirm the reports that Anarchism is making headway in the States. Already our Comrade Merlino's visit is producing signs of greater activity among the Socialists "on the other side." An Italian paper called "The Cry of the Oppressed" has also been started by the group of Italian Anarchists of New York. We wish all good luck to these last additions to our ranks.

A MEAN TRICK.

Comrade Grave, one of the editors of "La Révolte," was arrested a

fortnight before 1st May and sentenced to forty days imprisonment. The pretext for his arrest was non-payment of the fine imposed on him a year ago when he was condemned to six months imprisonment for printing in "La Révolte" an article on the Fourmies massacre, of which we gave extracts in *Freedom*, July 1891. In France such a fine is looked upon as purely nominal, but in this case the non-payment furnished the cowardly French Government with a convenient weapon to use against our comrade. He was released a couple of days after May 1st, the day so dreaded by governmental consciences. Governments have not yet realised that our movement does not depend on leaders. The arrest or prosecution of prominent individuals in it only serves to advertise us and to emphasise our opinions.

STRUCK DOWN!

DEDICATED TO COMRADES CHARLES, CAILES, BATTOLA AND DEAKIN,
WHO WERE SACRIFICED TO LAW, APRIL 4, 1892.

Once more has Liberty been struck and torn
By hand despotic, villainous and cruel
Mad acts of vengeance are but added fuel
To miseries and sorrows, hardly borne.
The powers that grind, the hands that execute,
But mould new forces for the mighty hour
When government shall fall, and freedom tower
On high, and law and privilege refute
Oh! be not faint of heart, nor slow of hand;
For Truth triumphant rides upon the gale,
And sheds her radiant glow from strand to strand,
To fill with hope the souls that never quail.
Comrade with comrade join! a ready band;
And rend for ever superstition's veil.

EDWARD J. WATSON.

A BALLAD OF SCOTLAND YARD.

A correspondent sends us the following lines which he dedicates
TO THE CHIEF COMMISSIONER OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Reach me down, reach me down the roll of Fame!
Through the Force be there jubilation and joy!
We've another, aye, and yet another name
To be blazoned here with Endacott and Bloy.
Once again the Moral Miracle displays,
As he phoenix-like renews his mighty youth.
How his duty to his office (and the Home Office) outweighs
Such punctilios as consistency and truth.
Once more the march of lawlessness is crost!
Once more two loyal sons of Scotland Yard
Have shown that no completeness to our cases shall be lost
For want of hearing sharp and swearing hard!
Where the red revolutionary bands
Of the Anarchists and Dynamiters meet
They went, with their lives in their hands,
And regulation boots upon their feet.
There's John Sweeney, he's an Irishman, you see,
And I call all his comrades to remark,
Right well he's learnt the lessons of the gallant R. I. C.
And practised them on Sundays in the Park,
For he moved inconspicuously thro' the mob
In a close-fitting mustard-color'd coat
With a special-duty truncheon in his bob
And the tablets of his memory for a "note."
And his comrade! mark his prudence and his tact!
Though for months he's been a listener at the "Tree,"
He has never shown a sign of such a compromising act
As a shorthand annotation—no, not he!
But so perfect is their discipline of mind,
So unerring is their stenographic art,
That in one concise expression all the purport they combined
Of two speeches that were made an hour apart.
Yet what public recognition have they won?
When they strive to put the issue plain and short
By swearing to both speeches in their evidence as one
They are frowned on and browbeaten in the Court!
Then here's health to these stalwarts of the Force!
For their merits and their martyrdom we know;
And be sure that (when the public has forgotten them, of course,)
Their names are on the roster for "Promo."

S. O.

We have had E. J. Watson's and S. O.'s verses for some time, but want of space prevented our printing them until now. They will recall the Walsall men and comrade Nicoll, if it were at all possible that we could forget them. Some friends hope that the anticipated change of government may bring with it a remission of the sentences passed on the Walsall comrades. We cannot hope for so much good to come out of what is scarcely ever more than a change of name. But whatever is sought at the hands of the new Home Secretary must be backed by a strong expression of public sympathy to produce any result at all, and this we want all friends and comrades to bear in mind. The matter must not be let drop, nor the part the police played in the affair be lost sight of. We hear that Charles's friends have visited him in prison and found him in fairly good health and spirits. He is no doubt buoyed up by the hope that we shall not forget him. We have not heard whether Deakin, Cailes or Battola have seen any friends.

We also beg to remind all sympathisers with Comrade Nicoll that he has left a little boy dependent for support on a hard-working grand-

mother. A good way of showing appreciation of Nicoll's manly bearing at his trial would be to send contributions, which we will gladly receive and acknowledge, in behalf of little Victor Nicoll.

IRELAND.

WE regret to say, as is usual at election times, this unfortunate country is the hot-bed of political rowdyism. Torn one way by the renegade Irish, who occupy the ridiculous position of the very "last ditch," into which they have been goaded by the English Tories to adorn their oft-told tales about "the disruption of the Empire" and "the future butchering of the loyal minority," pulled contrariwise by the Nationalists, who themselves cannot agree as to the exact road that leads to glory, the *shan van vocht*, poor old woman, as Ireland used to be called in the revolutionary ballads of the last century, is fairly moidered. Her priests tell her to hold tight to Gladstone's coat tails, and that he will carry her through; while those that don't believe in the G. O. M.'s promises call themselves Independents, but in reality are but the abject slaves of a dead leader worship. The men who were but a short time back the idols of the people, and the heroes of the strife between them and English coercion, now go to address their constituents in fear of their lives, and under military and police protection; and priests hurl maledictions from their altars on those who dare to vote for the so-called Independent party, encouraging the hot-headed peasants to cudgel and stone its representatives, short of actually killing them, because they say there is an attempt being made to "sever the golden link of love that has united the people and the priests for so many centuries." We quote from the electoral pastoral of Bishop Nulty. The words "golden link" are capable of more than one interpretation, but even putting the best construction possible upon them, we should suggest that links, of no matter what material, are only fetters, when the parties they bind want to go in opposite directions. National independence would be of small moment without a corresponding freedom of thought. This the Irish priest, superstition's doughtiest champion to-day, is naturally not inclined to concede to his flock. But the genuine movement in Ireland is indicated, to our minds, by a little halfpenny weekly paper, called the *Irish Worker*, started a couple of months back. It is, to quote its prospectus, "a journal exclusively devoted to the interests of the workers—free from politics and above the monetary control of unjust capitalism." Let it but free itself from the pettiness of mere nationalism and we guarantee the *Irish Worker* a long life and a successful one. It is but a small omen to prophecy by, but like the cloud, no bigger than a man's hand, that brought the rain upon a thirsty land, it may bring in its train the storm of social purification so badly needed in Ireland.

ANARCHISM FOR RURAL ENGLAND.

HOWEVER broadminded a man may be in his views, they are very largely formed and restricted by his surroundings. Thus it is probably that Socialist and Anarchist propagandists generally have devoted so little attention to the rural districts. Yet there cannot be any doubt that the great social change which we hope for must consist mainly in the workers getting possession of the land, seeing that it is to the land that we have to look for food and for our raw material. The Englishman is yearly becoming more and more a dweller in cities, but for all that the millions who live in the country, in rural England, must necessarily be an important factor in the reconstruction of society, and it is really a matter of vital importance that these millions should understand the doctrines of Socialism. In consequence of their seclusion and of their comparatively inactive mental life, due to the uneventfulness of their existence, the country workers are very much in the dark as to the truths of Socialism and Anarchy. Living in such close relations with their employers, they are very much more under the lash than are the workers in the towns. The fear of the boycott hangs over them continually, and the slightest reference to the hardships of their life is a dangerous proceeding, likely to call down upon them the wrath of their tyrants. Hence it is that Hodge is unawakened and has shown little or no desire for an alteration in his condition. When an energetic spirit arises amongst his class he generally becomes a poacher and gets the name of vagabond. If one arose who preached Revolution and Anarchy, his position would be hopeless, and those who sheltered him or gave him bread even would be marked men. But wherever the Socialistic seed has been scattered amongst the farm laborers and countryside workers, the reception it has met with has been so warm as to show that the hearts of the people of rural England are with us and need but little enlightenment to make them Anarchists to a man. Still that little has to be done. At present the countryman is in a state of comparative apathy. He needs to be enthused with Anarchist fervour.

In many respects the condition of the countryside laborer is lamentable in the extreme. His food is of the poorest and his dependence upon the wealth-owning class much greater than is that of his brother worker in the towns. In the villages everybody knows everybody else; everybody hears what is said and everybody knows who says it. Consequently the slightest expression of discontent is noted, and the one who gives utterance to it is known. His employer, too, is himself a dependent man, for he is practically under the thumb of his landlord, to be removed from his farm if he shows any sympathy with advanced thought or employs those who do so. Nor is he, as a rule, a very

prosperous individual now-a-days, and of course, as we know is the case in the towns, the poor employer is often the worst sweater. He has to live and feels the want of comforts and necessaries himself, and naturally he looks after himself before looking after those he employs. With the best of intentions the small employer cannot personally do much to raise the condition of his workpeople. The system and its chief supporters are the cause; he himself is only one of the results. With a small farmer it is just the same. He must make the two ends meet somehow. The rent must be paid, and of course with him rent is an important item. He has often little or no capital, so that he cannot introduce the best methods of cultivating the land and breeding cattle, and he has very little inclination to run the risk of going out of the beaten path. Economy is the great thing to be borne in mind every day of his life. When the grandfather of the writer was a farmer, some forty or fifty years ago, things were better for the master and for the man in rural England, as far as material prosperity went. Not much better of course, but still a shade better. The laborer had privileges which he does not possess to-day. The rent of his cottage was lower, he was allowed to glean a certain proportion of the corn which remained in the fields after the reaping was done, his work was more regular, and altogether the relations between the farmer and laborer were of a more liberal description than prevail to-day. On another farm to-day, rented by a near relative of the writer, the struggle for existence is much closer, and the problem of making both ends meet is much more difficult. Where in the former case men were employed, in the latter there are only growing youths and a girl or two, with perhaps a man called in now and again in the busy season. The lads sleep in the farm buildings, and although there is a certain rough familiarity between the men and their employer, their privileges are practically nil, and the farmer himself has a hard struggle to meet his landlord on rent day. The food of the farmer's man is doubtless quite as healthy, but it is much coarser and cheaper than that of the London artisan, and indeed his condition is really worse as far as food, clothing and comfort is concerned, although of course he is much better off as regards fresh air and healthy labor. Compared with many town industries, the farmer and the agricultural laborer get an inferior proportion of the wealth of society. Even if all the idlers were gone the agricultural portion of the population would still be defrauded of their fair share of the social wealth if the present proportion was maintained. Like the match-makers and other workers, who will easily recur to the reader's mind, they have been brought down by excessive competition below the ordinary subsistence level. An hour of their work is not worth anything like so much as an hour of an engineer for example, and if this proportion is maintained after the reconstruction of society they will still be plundered. They do not merely suffer from the direct oppression of the landlord, but indirectly all society is bearing upon them. This is one of the difficulties of the situation in explaining Socialism to them; but it will have to be met before the great social change can be made.

In the new society agriculture will be a very different thing from what it is to-day. It will be long no doubt before anything like our ideal in this direction will be realised, and a new generation of educated men will have grown up to take the place of the present race of workers, industrial and agricultural; a race in which the agricultural and the industrial will no longer be distinct, but combined, as the interests of healthy manhood require it. The communalisation of the land, although the first necessity of progress, will be the least remarkable feature of the change. All the objectionable conglomerations of humanity which we call cities will have disappeared. Town and country will be welded together by an immense network of inter-communication, probably in the shape of electric railways, so that the delights of town and country will at the same time be within the reach of all. The concert and the theatre, the museum and the art gallery will be as easy of access to the dweller in any part of the country as they are to the Londoner to-day. The worker will do his field work at one hour of the day and his factory work at another, and all in such a brief space of time as to leave him the major portion of the day for the higher pleasures of science, art, literature and social enjoyment. The work itself will of course be a pleasure, the labor reduced to a minimum, the conditions improved to the highest point. The factory will be well ventilated and roomy, for space will no longer be of such immense value as it is to-day; the dangerous machinery will be securely fenced in, for the lives of the workers will then be of paramount importance; the work in the fields will be arranged so as to give the greatest amount of physical enjoyment and benefit; and the scientific and other recreations will be no longer hampered by the want of necessary apparatus as is the case to-day with many of our poorest amateurs. There will be laboratories in which all can experiment, with apparatus for all to use. The libraries will be multiplied so that literature of every kind will be within the reach of all; art in its various forms will flourish more than it did in the days of Phidias in Greece, and the theatre, the lecture hall, etc., will never be wanting through lack of funds. Such is the society of the future as we picture it, a society from which we are only kept back by the ignorance of our fellow mortals, a society which will certainly be realised some day in the spirit, if not in the exact details, we have mentioned. The lonely villager needs it quite as much as the oppressed London worker, and is quite as ready to receive the Anarchist ideas. But how can we reach him?

VILIFICATION OF SOCIALISM.

EVERY movement which is made in the direction of bettering the condition of the workers of any country whatsoever, receives a large amount

of opposition and persecution from those who pray upon the wage-slaves. This is easily understood by those who have given thought and time to study of capital and labor. For when the victim of legal thefts organised under capitalism asks to have what is his given back, and his demand not being complied with, he sets about the task of finding out some means by which he can regain his possessions, then the thief lifts up his voice and cries "Robber." He uses the most opprobrious terms that come to the end of his tongue, to throw discredit on the movement which would compel him to disgorge some of his ill-gotten gains, and this is the case with Socialism to-day. The vilest terms that can be hurled against it and its exponents, are continually used; no words are too foul when applied to Socialists. But it has been so before now and in all probability will be so, until a better state of civilization is founded upon the ruins of the present one.

The vilification of Socialism flourished in the days of Robert Owen. Owen who had the welfare of the people at heart was as much misunderstood, as are the present exponents of the principles of Socialism. The *Saturday Magazine* of 29 February 1840 speaks of Socialism as follows:

"There is, in these days especially, a lofty and somewhat arrogant assumption of superiority. The school master has been abroad intelligence is diffused—intellect no longer feels its way with wholesome and necessary caution, it vaults in these ambitious days, and like ambition 'o'erleaps itself.' The world forsooth, is altogether wiser than it has been; and yet these are the days in which the opinions of a man can gain ground, whom our ancestors would have secured and whipt, as, plainly and confessedly, a sore rogue and itinerant corrupter of good sense and morality. Wild ridiculous fanatics, together with their miserable victims disfigure many a page of our goodly history but most, if not all, knew better than to attack the time-founded institutions of their country; these have ever been more spiritual enthusiasts than temporal rascals, not less crackbrained but more honest....."

These Owenites form a sect whose object is to introduce a specious generalization of larceny, and an universal libertinism into the health of their country; one man endeavoring to substitute his crude nostrum for the results of all the wisdom and experience of the past, the fruit of the common sense and intelligence of every age, conformed and hallowed by the great teacher Time himself, in short to overturn our established faith, the common faith of the whole civilized world, to govern and direct man's social condition in a new method with his theory. But no, it cannot be. Gullible as some of the masses even of the nineteenth century have proved themselves, they cannot but see that these very doctrines which is professed are to improve our social state, and to increase our social happiness, actually outrage in their very outset the eternal principles of both.

"Old English sense is yet too prevalent to permit her multitude to gorge the monstrosities of Owenism..... We might stand by idle and unhurt, and watch the unholy flame of this new sect blaze for a while, and pass again into darkness; but who can tamely bide the thought of all the poor fluttering and weak-minded rushing, moth-like, into the glare to perish: the easily deluded many, the reckless or the ignorant? Ye pastors of Christ's people, watch and be vigilant, the greedy wolf that dare not attack the steadfast and the true, may devour the thoughtless and unwary of your several flocks....."

For ourselves, we have no fear of the ultimate prevalence of Socialism. Whatever importance or dangerous influence it may appear to have obtained, seems to arise, like that of some disease, more from the unhealthy state of the body affected than from its own intrinsic energy. Socialism may for a while, serve to settle and stagnate the scum and garbage of England's thickly populated, and at present excited country, till a return of sanity and vigor shall cast off its excrescence of its weakness. But we must not in the mean time forget that by its accursed doctrines, many a heart may be made sorrowful, and many a soul immortal perish, utterly and for ever, if deluded by these pernicious fallacies from the cheerful hopes and godly promises held out to it in the faith of a Christian."

That is the style in which they spoke of the Owen's principles fifty-two years ago. And this style is used even to-day. But with a difference for Socialism is better understood than it was. The "easily deluded many" spoken of in this quotation, will no longer be deluded, and the darkness of despair will soon be dispelled by the light of Socialism. Too long have the toilers been kept in ignorance by the spirit of Individualism, too long has the doctrine of "each one for himself and the devil take the hindmost" been in vogue. This will soon be a thing of the past. As in bye-gone days, the cry is to-day, that the pastors should look after the workers, and watch over them so that they do not go astray. Bah! The workers have been too long in leading-strings held by parsons, masters kings, and other false self interested teachers. The workers begin to see, that they can walk without these self-elected guides, and when the majority of them have once recognised this fact, then will the Socialistic era begin. The vilification of Socialism results, for one thing, in drawing the attention of those who are indifferent to it. For when the indifferent find that sermons against Socialism are given in churches and Socialism is spoken of in Parliaments, as well as at street-corners, their dull minds must and will be moved. What harm if we are called "robbers, thieves, scum, dregs, agitators" when our gospel of Socialism must in the end bring peace on earth, and good-will among men? If a few brave souls are torn from our midst, and imprisoned in our modern Bastilles, or are let to execution for that which they hold to be true, there are many others ready to take their place in the ranks. A good cause will never be stamped out by persecution. The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church. If argument cannot prove a certain theory or movement to be wrong, bloodshed will never do it. The Anarchist-Hun which is now indulged in, will only be the means of spreading

our principles, in spite of the "poison of the press." Socialism must conquer by its natural healthy force and Individualism must recede into the darkness from which it sprung. Let us not forget, that the place of each comrade who is torn from us must be filled. If we cannot all be speakers, we can at least be workers of some sort in the cause. Let each of us do the best he can by explaining to shop-mates, neighbours and relations what Socialism means, then the cause will soon be triumphant. A man is a coward who knows that the present system of society is rotten, and yet does nothing towards altering this state of things himself, but leaves it to those who come after him. Let us remember the words of Tom Paine, who said: "If there must be war, let it be in my day that my child may have peace." Would that these words might sink into the hearts of all who look forward to the time when poverty shall be a thing of the past.

G. E. CONRAD NÆWIGER.

ANARCHIST MORALITY.

By P. KROPOTKINE.

(Continued from previous number.)

X.

And now before we close let us say a word concerning those two terms, *altruism* and *egoism*, outcomes of the English school, which continually grate upon our ears.

Until now we have not even mentioned them, for the simple reason that we cannot see the distinction between them which the English moralists have striven to establish.

When we say "Do unto others as we would they should do unto us" do we advocate altruism or egoism? Now we take a higher standpoint and say "The happiness of each is closely bound up with the happiness of all about him. Perhaps a few years of comparative happiness are possible in a society based upon the misfortune of others; but such happiness is built upon sand. It cannot last, the least thing is enough to wreck it; and it is miserably petty compared with the happiness possible to a community of equals. So whenever you aim at the general good, you will act well"—when we say this, are we preaching altruism or egoism? We simply state a fact.

And if we add in a paraphrase of Guyau's words: "Be strong; be great in your every action: develop your life in every direction; be as rich as possible in energy, and to this end be the most social and sociable of beings—if you desire to enjoy a full, perfect and fruitful life. Always guided by a fully developed intelligence, struggle, venture into danger—for danger has its own great pleasures,—throw in your strength without taking count of it, all you have, into everything that you feel to be great and good,—then will you enjoy the maximum of happiness. Be one with the masses, then, whatever may happen to you in life, you will feel that the hearts of those you honour are beating in unison with yours; while those of the men you despise are in discord." When we say this, are we teaching altruism or egoism?

To struggle, to look danger in the face, to jump into the water that we may save, not a human being only, but even a cat; to live on dry bread in order to put an end to inequities that revolt us; to feel ourselves in harmony with such as are worthy of love; to feel ourselves loved by them, this for a weak philosopher perhaps means self-sacrifice. But for the man or woman filled with energy, force, vigour and youth it is the conscious joy of life. Is this egoism? Is it altruism?

As a rule the moralists who have built up their systems on a supposed opposition between the altruistic and the egoistic sentiment, have gone astray. If this opposition were real, were the interest of the individual man really opposed to those of society, the human race could never have come into being; no animal species could have attained to its present development. If it were not an immense pleasure to all the ants to work for the well-being of the colony, the colony could never have existed, and the ant would not be what it is—the most highly developed creature among insects; a creature whose brain, which can be with difficulty seen under the magnifying glass, is almost as powerful as the average brain of man. Were birds not to find an intense pleasure in their migrations, in the care they take to rear their brood, in common action to defend their communities from birds of prey, the bird would never have arrived at the state of development to which it has attained. In place of progressing the bird-type would have retrogressed.

So when Spencer looks forward to a time when the welfare of the individual member will be merged in the welfare of the species, he forgets one little thing, that *if the two had not been for all ages identical*, the evolution, even of the animal kingdom, could never have been worked out.

There has even been, there always is, in the animal kingdom and in the human species, an enormous number of individual beings who do not understand that the welfare of the individual member and that of the species are in reality identical. They do not understand that, when to *live* an intense life is the aim of each individual member, the greatest intensity of life is to be found in the greatest

sociableness, in the most complete identification of oneself with others. But this is only a lack of intelligence, a lack of understanding. At all times there have been men of limited intelligence; at all times there have been imbeciles. But never at any epoch, historical or even geological, have individual interests been in opposition to those of society. From all time they have remained identical, and those who have best understood this have always enjoyed the completest life.

The distinction, therefore, between egoism and altruism is absurd in our eyes. That is why we have said nothing either of the compromises that man, if we are to believe the utilitarians, is ever making between his egoistic and altruistic sentiments. Such compromise can have no existence for the man who knows his own mind. What really takes place in the present condition of life, if we seek to live in conformity with our principles of equality, is that at every step we feel them outraged.

However modest may be our food and our bed, we are very Rothschilds in comparison with him who sleeps on bridges and is often in need of a piece of dry bread. In however small a degree we may give ourselves up to intellectual and artistic enjoyment, we are still Rothschilds in comparison with the millions who come home stupefied by manual toil, who can take no delight in art or science, and will die without having ever known these higher pleasures.

We feel that we have not worked out the principle of equality to its conclusion. But we will have no compromise with these conditions. We revolt against them; they weigh heavily on us. They make us revolutionists. We have no commerce with what revolts our feelings. We repudiate every compromise, even every armistice, and we are pledged to struggle to the death against such conditions.

Herein lies no compromise; and the man who is convinced does not wish to be allowed to go to sleep quietly, in the hope of everything changing of its own accord.

We have now reached the end of our subject. There are epochs, we have said, in which the moral conception changes entirely. A man perceives that what he had considered moral is the deepest immorality. In some instances, it is a custom, a venerated tradition, that is fundamentally immoral; in others, we find a moral system framed in the interests of a single class. We cast them overboard and raise the cry "Down with morality!" It becomes a duty to act immorally.

Let us welcome such epochs, for they are epochs of criticism; they are an infallible sign that thought is working in society. A higher morality has begun to be wrought out.

What this morality will be we have sought to formulate, taking as our basis the study of man and animal.

We have seen the kind of morality which is even now shaping itself in the ideas of the masses and of the thinkers. This morality will issue no commands. It will refuse once and for all to model individuals according to an abstract idea, as it will refuse to mutilate them by religion, law, or government. It will leave to the individual man full and perfect liberty. It will be but a simple record of facts, a science. And this science will say to man: "If you are not conscious of strength within you, if your energies are only just sufficient to maintain a colourless, monotonous life, without strong impressions, without deep joys, but also without deep sorrows, well then, keep to the simple principles of a just equality. In relations of equality you will find probably the maximum of happiness possible to your feeble energies.

But if you feel within you the strength of youth, if you wish to live, if you wish to enjoy a perfect, full and overflowing life—that is, know the highest pleasure which a living being can desire—be strong, be great, be vigorous in all you do.

Sow life around you. Take heed that if you deceive, lie, intrigue, cheat, you thereby demean yourself, belittle yourself, confess your own weakness beforehand, play the part of the slave of the harem, who feels himself the inferior of his master. Do this, if it so pleases you, but know betimes that humanity will regard you as petty, contemptible and feeble, and will treat you as such. Having no evidence of your strength, it will act towards you as one worthy of pity—and pity only. Do not blame humanity if of your own accord you thus paralyse your energies. Be strong, on the other hand, and once you have seen unrighteousness and recognised it as such—inequity in life, a lie in science, or suffering inflicted by another—rise in revolt against the iniquity, the lie, or the injustice.

Struggle! To struggle is to live, and the fiercer the struggle, the intenser the life. Then you will have lived, and lived a life, and a few hours of such life are worth years spent vegetating in the swamp's corruption.

Struggle! So that all may live this rich, overflowing life; and be sure that in this struggle you will find a joy greater than anything else can give.

This is all that the science of morality can tell you; yours be the choice.

THE END.

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RENT, INTEREST, AND WAGES.*

THE author is one of the many whose eyes were first opened to the evils of modern society by the eloquence of Henry George's "Progress and Poverty." The book made him a convert to Land Nationalisation, and like George himself he regards the possession of the land by the State as the cure-all for the woes of mankind. He has even formed the daring conception of a world so federated and harmonious that the rents of the whole planet might be collected at one central receiving-house, and redistributed to the nations in proportion to their numbers. But whilst maintaining that private property in land is the cause of all our social misery, he differs very strongly from his master in several points of detail, both in theory and practice. Unlike George, for instance, he declares against interest, which, as a matter of fact, he identifies in nearly all cases with rent. The failure to perceive this identity he considers to have been George's great error. Again, he proposes to acquire the land for the State by purchase, not by the "single tax," which he rightly asserts to be exactly the same as confiscation, a process to which he, rightly or wrongly, supposes the English people would never give their consent. He also produces a novel objection to the "single tax," namely, that the occupier of the land would still be regarded as in some sort an owner, and under the stress of the new taxation would become an object of popular sympathy. Except on this one point of the land, he is not by any means enthusiastic for State Socialism, for he supposes, like ourselves, that State management would in most cases only increase the present evils. He sees no danger in competition, if it were really "free," and all had equal access to the means of production. At the same time he is willing to see the individual fettered by the State, if no other way can be found to escape from our present conditions. Throughout the book he shows a remarkable freedom of speculation, which proves, at all events, that he does not take his opinions at second-hand. Poverty he attributes entirely to over-production and insufficient consumption. Both, he thinks, would be cured at once by State-ownership of land; but, in the meantime, he boldly maintains that waste is an excellent thing; that merchants, middlemen, and even large armies and destructive wars are to be encouraged, because they increase consumption, and so give more work to the workers. Temperance, on the other hand, he supposes, would bring an immense increase of misery, as reducing consumption; and Free Trade, under our present land-laws, he regards as altogether a mistake. He frankly asks for a tax on corn in order to give more employment. As to the main question, he looks to a peaceful solution, partly because it is cheaper, partly, he owns, because he "holds a fairly comfortable berth, which he would not like to lose." This is honest, but from the would-be leaders in such subjects as this we rather expect a zeal which has no reserves, and is untainted by any personal care or reflection. The book, though ill-arranged, abounds in apt stories and illustrations, and is useful for its references to labour questions on the Continent.

THE PROPAGANDA.

REPORTS.

LONDON—

London.—The usual meetings have been held in Hyde and Regent's Parks and other open air stations. Advantage was taken of the election excitement to hold valuable discussions with small groups of workmen, after the main meetings of the politicians had been broken up by mobs of party-rowdies.

PROVINCES—

Leicester.—Anarchism is taking a great hold in Leicester. The frightful lies and miserable slanders of the capitalistic press, together with the brutal violence and unprincipled plots of the governmental bullies, have simply tended to produce the inevitable reaction in the minds of reasonable and sensible men and women—and the result of their enquiry into the principles which have been denounced as "diabolical" has been to convince many of them of the sweet reasonableness of Anarchy. We are now much stronger, both in numbers and enthusiasm, than ever before. Our new groups are working well, our local speakers are improving, one or two new ones are preparing to enter on the war-path; we can double our usual order for "Freedom," and we have printed and circulated 13,000 leaflets in the month. During the past few weeks we have had a visit from Stockton of Manchester, who by his eloquence in speech, and vigour in debate, excited quite a sensation. Bullas of Sheffield has also been here, and George Cores from Birmingham on June 26th. A discussion after Cores' evening address; we had to remain until 10.30 p.m., and a considerable portion of the large audience remained on the ground still later, eagerly debating the question of Government v. Anarchy.

The police with their usual affability content themselves with an occasional visit to order us to remove ourselves to another spot, but we are now quite convinced that they do not really mean it, and after a little gentle "chaff," the incident closes. We commend their urbane and pleasant demeanour to the imitation of their Metropolitan brethren. Our young friends of the detective force still pay us some attention, and their glossy silk hats excite great admiration; they are quite an ornament to a meeting, and in spite of the fact that they steadfastly refuse to contribute to our collections we hope they will not forsake us.

For several weeks past we have debated, on Friday evenings, the question of Anarchy v. Social Democracy with the local S.D.F. Branch. It was apparently their intention to demolish Anarchism in the first round, but after three evenings at it they seem tired of the fight, and are unable to come up to "time"—and this after they have so distorted the principles they profess as to make them unrecognisable. We expect before long to have a few converts from their ranks, and to see Social Democracy as effete as the Fabianism and Christian Socialism of this town. Anarchism holds the field.

Bristol.—The Socialists are working hard at outdoor meetings, three being held each Sunday and others during the week. Matters are becoming more lively on account of the General Election being imminent. The local comrades have issued a manifesto and taken a deliberate stand against both Liberals and Tories. Instead, however, of advocating the Anarchist principle of shunning parliament and its evils, they are impressing upon their audiences the necessity of forming a labor party with the view of returning members to the House of Commons. How far this is practicable or right time must tell. It must, though, never be forgotten that parliament can only go so fast as the people choose to make it.

Birmingham and Walsall.—Since the last report was written we have had a series of excellent meetings at the Bull Ring, Birmingham, and Town's End Banks, Walsall. Thomas Barclay of Leicester and Alf Barton of Manchester have both paid a visit, leaving a good impression behind them. W. Spriggs, W. Rooke, F. Milner and G. Cores have also addressed the meetings. The election fever has aroused opposition in both places, and by the questions and discussions (which have lasted for hours) thus created have caused increased interest in our meetings. At the worst of times we have quite held our own, to say the least. We have had a steady sale of literature. In all, we have made a good beginning in Birmingham and kept the flag flying gallantly in Walsall. Anarchism thrives.

Hull.—What are we doing in Hull, that is the question I asked myself several times, and the answer is, not as much as we ought to do, and less than we could do. But for all that the Gospel of Liberty is constantly propagated by individual members, and collectively we do also a bit. We hold outdoor meetings every Sunday at Drypool Green, where generally Comrade J. Sketchley speaks. We also made a stir on the first of May. We had a platform in the same field where the Trades Council had four, and we had the satisfaction of having the largest audience around ours. We had a large sheet, 11 feet long and 6 feet wide, with the Red Flag and the Cap of Liberty painted on it, and also the motto "The land for the laborers, the produce for the producers, and liberty and comfort for all," also three more banners. Our new one, having the capitalist carried by laborers painted upon it, attracted a good deal of attention. A public debate has been arranged to take place between Comrade J. Sketchley and Mr. J. White on Revolutionary Socialism. Hull is in the proud position of having a Labor Candidate, or rather a compound of the Liberal, Capitalist and middle class with a dash of a reactionary Labor Leader, an idol for the foolish to worship. Who says the millennium is not come when wolf and sheep walk side by side? It is a sad sight to see labor leaders waving their hats and cheering the capitalists just because before the election the latter use plenty of soft soap.

Aberdeen.—Large meetings continue to be the rule with us on Sunday mornings at Castle Street; our crowds besides being large are very steady and attentive, the majority of the listeners standing the whole time of the meetings, which often exceeds two hours in duration. We have this month added 3 new members to our list one of whom, Comrade Alex. Duncan, an old radical with powerful lungs, speaks along with Comrade H. H. Duncan in the open. It is acknowledged by all, even by the Social Democrats, that our meetings are the best of those held in the open air in Aberdeen. Sale of literature keeps up wonderfully well. At one of the Election meetings of Dr. Bryce a comrade asked the candidate if he would be in favour of an inquiry into the Walsall Police Plot. The question met with approving applause from every part of the crowded hall. Of course Bryce "was not acquainted with the facts of the case and would not say anything definite." However, the same question will be put to every one of the five candidates for Parliamentary "honors," and at least this much good will be done, Anarchy will be brought under the noses of a few who have never thought of it before.

Great Yarmouth.—Splendid propaganda has been done in Yarmouth during the past two months. Most successful meetings have been held every Sunday evening, weather permitting, besides several in the morning and afternoon. Comrade Mowbray has been with us two Saturdays. May 22nd his subject was "Is Socialism avoidable" in the morning on the Hall Quay, large and attentive audience, and several questions asked and satisfactorily answered. Saturday May 21st, evening, very interesting debate between a Mr. Greenacre and Headley on "Is Socialism sound," which lasted for about three hours. Mowbray arrived at the close and asked our opponent a question, when he immediately commenced to abuse Mowbray, and the meeting eventually closed with a free fight. On the Sunday following, May 29th, at the close of a very large and interesting meeting, the Chief Constable, Mr. Brogden, pulled Comrade Poynts off the platform continuing the meeting after 10 p.m. On June 5th Comrade Mackenzie of the Social Democratic Federation assisted us at three meetings. On June 5th we commenced a 3 days' campaign, with the assistance of Mowbray who delivered lectures on the following subjects:—On the 25th at 8 p.m., on the Church Plain, Working Men's Politics; on Sunday on the Hall Quay at 11, The General Election—for whom shall we vote?; at 7, on Communism, in the evening. Every one seemed astonished at the large audiences and the marked attention we received; plenty of opposition in various forms and closing with Mowbray's being challenged to a debate on "Is Man a Creature of Circumstances?" to take place on Monday evening at 8, on the Church Plain. On Monday after waiting until 8.30 for our opponent, who did not turn up, Mowbray lectured on the subject arranged for debate, a gentleman named Roberts taking up the negative, and quite an educational evening was spent. Needless to say, Mowbray got the best of the argument. Meetings have been held on the other Sundays during the two months by Poynts, Saunders and Headley on various aspects of the Social Problem. On the whole we are making good headway for the cause of Freedom. Comrade Poynts is staying in Yarmouth for the summer, and we expect comrade Wess to be amongst us for a few days shortly to assist in the fight.—J. HEADLEY.

NOTICES.

LONDON—

CLUB AUTONOME.—Annual Excursion to Morgan's Farm, Tbeydon Bois, on Sunday, July 17th. To start from the club, at 9 o'clock sharp, by four-horse pleasure vans. Tickets—adults 2s. 6d., children 1s.

PROVINCES—

LEICESTER.—The Annual Picnic of the Midland Counties' Socialists and Anarchists will, this year, be to Rowley, in Derbyshire (for Chatsworth and Haddon Hall), on Bank Holiday Monday, August 1st. A large gathering of Fabians, Social Democrats and Anarchists is expected, and all friends of the Cause are heartily invited. Excursions will run for all parts; and a united Tea and Conference will be held at Haddon at 4 p.m.

BRIGHTON.—A Comrade highly recommends pleasant apartments. Near sea. Gardens opposite. Excellent cooking. Terms moderate. Mrs. Caslon, 11, Dorset Gardens.

*"Rent, Interest, and Wages," by Michael Flürscheim. Wm. Reeves, 185, Fleet Street, E.C.