

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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MONTHLY; ONE PENNY.

Labour Day and the General Strike.

There is a great idea developing in the Labour movement at the present time; it is developing rapidly and, as we believe, irresistibly; and the First of May, 1906, will become the historic date of the first seriously organised effort to give this idea—the General Strike—a definitely conscious aim.

Although the idea is rapidly spreading to many countries, and will soon assume a thoroughly international character, it is to France that we are all looking for the example of a bold and uncompromising use of the General Strike to gain, not certainly at first the ultimate ideal of the Revolutionary Socialist movement, but some substantial concessions from the exploiters, which long years of barren "political action" have failed to bring within even measurable distance of being realised.

In 1889, when in Paris the First of May was declared as an International Workers' Holiday, high hopes were raised of results that would spring from this exercise of the workers' will against the rule of their masters. But the politicians saw there was too much hope for the workers in this independent spirit. They might even gain some advantage, such as an eight-hour day, without their help. They saw a possible end to their electoral campaigning if these tactics were encouraged. So scenting revolution, and perhaps danger to their own valuable skins, they shook their wise heads, denounced the Anarchists and Revolutionaries, and spread their political palsy among the Labour Unions. In a word, they emasculated—at least in England—the moral strength and enthusiasm of the May Day demonstrations. In France our comrades have been alive to this, and Pouget, Peloutier, and others maintained the agitation for an eight-hour day by means of the General Strike, and now we are on the eve of events that we hope will bear good fruit in return for their long and arduous labours.

Through all these years the politician has stood as the "false friend" of the workers, whilst all that Anarchists have predicted as the outcome of political tactics has proved only too true. Were we not told in the past that the General Strike was impossible? Were we not told that an anti-military propaganda was impracticable? And yet to-day these are the only two modes of action that inspire the more advanced workers with any hope for the future. Everything that has happened in the Labour movement for the past two years has been an unmistakable demonstration to the people that the real struggle for the conquest of the Socialist ideal *must* be fought outside of Parliaments. Equally clear is it that every attempt of the Social Democrats to handle the political machine has ended in failure, shame, disgrace. The action of Millerand and Jaures caused an outcry even in their own camp. Now comes Briand, who by his silence gives tacit support to Barthou in his treatment of the postal employees.

Is it not time that all this jugglery ceased? Who wants your old-age pensions, which we shall never live to see? Who wants your compulsory arbitration, which settles nothing, but embitters everything, and then ties our hands? Who wants all this patching of a doomed and detestable system? Not those whose hearts beat with the real spirit of Socialism. Every day the workers pay their toll of killed and wounded, and there are three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, so that in the twelve months the Moloch of capital claims its 116,000 victims of (reported) accident and disease. Every year, of the £1,800,000,000 of wealth they create, they are robbed of two-thirds; every year we read the same figures—30 per cent. of the population living in poverty and want. And the years roll on "in their dreadful round of injustice, misery, and death for the toiling masses," and the smug respectabilities in the Labour movement cry, "Not too fast!" And Labour Day in England in 1906 finds them with no word of hope for the workers.

In France and in America no man can say what the morrow may bring forth for the Socialist movement. In things revolutionary it is the unexpected that always happens, and in truth the revolution is preparing faster than most of us think. But England lags behind, and the "celebrations" of May Day, 1906, we fear, will show no signs of that intelligence, and fire, and energy which are necessary for the conquest of a new social order.

JOHN MOST.

(Continued from No. 205.)

Most's imprisonment (April, 1881—October, 1882) no more interrupted the regular publication of the *Freiheit* by the comrades who set up the paper, and others whose names scarcely came before the public, than did his years of prison life in America; moreover, he always succeeded in remaining the principal contributor by smuggling his copy through the prison bars. He was an expert in prison life, so to speak, always keeping his spirits up, and by gymnastics and mental exercise evading physical degradation. Thus he left prison, as a rule, in full vigour, and immediately took his place on the platform and in the editor's office.

Anarchism made further progress in the *Freiheit* of 1881 and 1882; but in 1882 new persecutions taxed the determined devotion of the publishing group to the utmost. An article approving the killing of Cavendish and Burke in Phoenix Park, Dublin, was the cause of the prosecution (April, 1882), and this time the compositors of the paper, Schwelm and Merten, were sentenced to long terms of hard labour. After this, the English police, seeing that they could not kill the paper, felt that they were hampered by the formalities of "mere law," and adopted arbitrary measures throughout, giving out that all who took any part whatever in printing and distributing further issues of the *Freiheit* would be arrested. After keeping front for months to these continuous vexations, an opportunity offered itself to have the paper printed at Schaffhausen, in Switzerland, and by the intermediary of Stellmacher, an Anarchist who in 1884 was hanged in Vienna, this was done (summer, 1882). The fact that in these transactions—the details of which the London group could not, of course, regulate from a distance—an individual took part in Switzerland whom the German Social Democrats five years later found out to have been a police spy—this fact still serves Social Democratic historians as the basis of their assertion that the *Freiheit* was a police paper!

When Most left prison (autumn, 1882) he did the best thing that could be done under the circumstances: he accepted the invitation of Justus Schwab and the New York German comrades to come to America, and to publish the *Freiheit* at New York. That this temporary measure had to become a permanent one is the tragedy of his life. He then, and, I believe, for many years, perhaps until his death, never dreamed that he should never more return to his real field of action, Europe.

The native-American Socialist movement of the epoch of the International had become almost extinct in the early eighties; only in Chicago and in California new efforts began to be made. The German movement had been discredited by the quarrelsome pedantry of Sorge and others to whom Karl Marx had confided the care of the remnant of his followers in the International. The German expulsions of Socialists in 1878 and 1879 brought many Social Democrats over to the States, and the numerous local societies all took sides and mostly split over the differences between the *Freiheit* and the official party. The Chicago Socialists, A. Spies, the editor of the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, and others of the murdered of November, 1887, and many New York Socialists, Justus Schwab, etc., took part with the *Freiheit*, and Most stepped at once on to well-prepared ground. When in Austria and Germany, his appearances on the platform were but few and far between, as each speech usually led to a spell of imprisonment; when in London in 1879-80 much of the time was taken up by polemics, personal questions, embittered encounters with tenacious opponents. In America in those early years he really enjoyed free speech on his large lecturing tours, he came into contact with numerous comrades, and had reasons to believe a hopeful, growing movement ahead. At first all went well; the Pittsburg Convention in the autumn of 1883 formed a federation of existing groups, the International Working People's Association, and adopted a platform worded by Most. The Chicago movement made rapid progress, and Parson's *Alarm* restarted the English movement, this time as a revolutionary and Anarchist one. Most himself now first formulated his ideas on Anarchism in a series of articles, reprinted as a pamphlet ("Free Society").

The early eighties were, like the early seventies and the early nineties, periods of growing Anarchist agitation and action until brute force, that highly intellectual weapon of modern as well as of primitive society, repressed once more the then but small numbers of those who rose for freedom. As no idea was ever crushed by repression, and no

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NOTES.

MARXIAN MAKEBELIEVE.

ARE the Marxians intellectually fog-bound, or are they really conscious of the absurdity of the pretensions they make with all the dogmatism of their cult? This question suggests itself to us because of a certain divergence of opinion between the S.D.F. and the I.L.P. as to what constitutes "true" Socialism. *Justice* is not quite satisfied with Hardie's position, and begs to remind him that, so far from Marx's influence passing away, "there is no other Socialist theory in the field in International Socialism," and modestly asks, "What other teaching is there at this moment that will bear half-an-hour's open discussion? None whatever. In fact, nobody of any note dares to debate against the Marxist theories set forth by a capable exponent." If this isn't good old crusted conservatism with its blind faith and its prejudices, what is? But we fear that there is a good deal of insincerity in all this bombast, for *Justice*, without a blush—having long since dispensed with that sign of modesty—goes on to explain that "How to organise the General Strike nationally and internationally, so that it may lead directly and speedily to the Social Revolution, national and international, either by capturing the political forces or by physical force, is the most pressing question now before the international proletariat."

Who would believe after this that the advocacy of the General Strike up to a year ago had been left entirely to the Anarchist "dreamers," who for this very propaganda had been doubly anathematised by these same Social Democrats? Now they wish to monopolise the idea for their political manoeuvres. But they are too late. Its very inception and its very spirit belong to the Revolution.

"THE BLIND AND DEAD."

"Queen of slaves! Hoodwinked angel of the blind and dead!" cries Shelley in his denunciation of conventional custom. And what less could one say of the wretched creatures, motheries of men and women, who have turned their backs on Maxim Gorky because of his defiance of their base, heart-killing social hypocrisies? When the fulsome hypocrite Talmage tried to defame the memory of George Eliot for similar reasons, Ingersoll, though not agreeing with her action, boldly defended her, and held the reverend humbug up to contempt by applying to him the lines from Shakespeare: "I tell thee, churlish priest, a ministering angel shall this woman be when thou liest howling." Gorky, fortunately, is alive to defend himself, and his courageous attitude will win him the respect of all lovers of liberty. As to those who have villified him, they are but a parasitic class steeped to their eyes in every form of political and social corruption, and soon to be on their trial for their countless crimes.

The workers of America, we are sure, will know with what contempt to treat his detractors, and will heartily recognise his genius and his service to the cause of the Russian Revolution.

LABOUR REPRESENTATION.

A letter from a comrade in South America asks us if it is true, as he hears, that the Labour group in the House of Commons is rendering great service to the English workers. We are not aware of any individual worker—except the late John Burns, now dead to Socialism—whose position has been financially improved as a result of the last election. We believe, however, there are quite a number of Labour representatives who have strong hopes of enjoying the advantages of official salaries after the next General Election. Outside the charmed circle of these chosen ones, however, the working man stands face to face with capitalistic exploitation pursuing its uninterrupted course. And the only question we ask ourselves is, When will the workers open their eyes to the great Political Lie? When will they understand that never can an act of expropriation be carried through by these pretended saviours of their class? And less than that will never bring freedom and well-being.

(Continued from page 13).

progress was ever won save by overthrowing hosts of brutal and stupid obstacles, these early defeats are but inevitable episodes and stepping-stones. The French and Swiss Governments meant to stamp out Anarchism in the early eighties by expelling Anarchists from Switzerland, rendering the publication of the *Révolte* impossible in Geneva; hunting down the Lyons Anarchist papers and imprisoning the Lyons Anarchists, P. Kropotkin and others. The real result of these persecutions was, however that the *Révolte* was boldly transplanted to Paris, and from this centre made Anarchism more firmly rooted in France than the Geneva propaganda could have done. The *Freiheit*, which in London might not have been able to live after the years of excitement were over, was driven to America, where it prospered for many years. In Austria, since 1882, the whole German and Bohemian speaking party—a small clique excepted—was in favour of Most, and evolving towards Anarchism, though their papers, *Zukunft* ("The Future") and others, could scarcely print a line on the subject that was not confiscated, and the fate meted out to those who spread Most's papers was ten years, or even more, of penal servitude. This led to a series of acts of violence, and early in 1884 a period of savage repression crushed all external manifestations of propaganda in Austria and Hungary for years. In Germany the friends of Most were hunted down to such a degree by police and Social Democrats that they could not keep their ground; there also a few of the best perished after violent attempts (Reinsdorf and others). For some time refugees from Germany and Austria swarmed to Switzerland, but persecutions and numerous expulsions (1883-85) destroyed this new centre of propaganda. Thus London and the United States only remained where Most's paper could be openly supported by subscribers; everywhere else it had to be circulated as a secret paper, at great personal risk.

During these years, 1882-85, the *Freiheit*, to my impression, was at its best. It is really stirring reading. Most, ever cheerful, ever bold, hits hard. Then came times of disappointment. American "liberty" suddenly threw off the mask, and the infamous horrors of the Chicago hunt for Anarchists' blood followed (1886-87); on the other side, internal dissensions paralysed the movement; of the latter I will speak first.

Most's Anarchism, as expressed in the first edition of his "Free Society," was entirely home-made; it was Federalist Socialism, hardly anything else. He had had hardly any access at that time, I believe, to real Anarchist literature, which was not so readily accessible then as it is to-day. Some German Anarchists, like Rinke, who had lived in Switzerland as members of the Jurassian Federation, and who had closely followed the elaboration of Communist Anarchism in the *Révolte*, looked, of course, askance at the uncouth authoritarian Communism of Most in 1882-83. If only they had been patient enough to explain matters to Most in a quiet way! For the latter by-and-by modified his views, and accepted Communist Anarchism fully the moment he really knew it from its proper sources. But they made their better knowledge a means of correcting and reproving, and Most's temper was too Anarchistic to stand this. Moreover, he had reason at the time to believe that these theoretical polemics were but a pretext and the outer form of a deeper intrigue against his influence in Germany and Austria. For in 1884 a great number of refugees from Austria, expelled from Switzerland, had come to London; and centred round Joseph Peukert, an Austrian Anarchist, the editor of *Die Zukunft*, and the uncontested leader of the Austrian revolutionary revival of 1882-84. Driven to London, surrounded by friends and admirers, used to power, so to speak, by the past years in Austria, he became a rival to Most, and instead of finding a way to co-operate with him, endeavoured to crush him and to step into his place. His prestige with the Austrians served him for this purpose as well as the better theoretical knowledge of Anarchism which he, Rinke, and others had picked up in France and in Switzerland. Under these circumstances *Der Rebell* was restarted (1884-86), and continued by *Die Autonomie* (1886-92). They certainly made Communist Anarchism better known by means of translations of P. Kropotkin's and other pamphlets and articles, but Peukert and his friends themselves did not know how to write; dulness and absolute lack of humour characterise them; Most's verve, humour, common-sense, irrepressible cheerfulness,—all these are sadly absent. If they had not interfered, who knows whether Most in the early nineties—when Anarchism was first propagated in Germany by publications published in the country itself (*Der Socialist*, Berlin, etc.)—would not have found means to take a more direct part in this new movement, and might have returned to Europe, which was always so much nearer to him than America. As it was, this London opposition against the *Freiheit* took the most hateful forms, and was also the cause of the drama the victim of which was Most's truest friend and best of comrades, John Neve, arrested in Belgium in 1887, handed over to Germany, and deceased in a prison cell nine years later. The sequel of Neve's arrest was that Peukert was discredited to the utmost degree with Most and his friends, that Peukert's friends stuck to him the more, and the struggle was embittered. Finally, also, Peukert left London and edited the *New York Anarchist*. In the end things ended well in this way, that part of the independent Socialists who in 1890 had left the official German party, accepted Anarchism, and began to replace secret by public propaganda in Berlin since 1891. Most welcomed this movement, and the *Autonomie* ceased publication. Since that time the scope of the *Freiheit* was limited to the Germans in the United States.

(To be concluded.)

A CALL TO ARMS IN THE UNITED STATES.

"The infamous action of the American Mine Owners' Association in seizing Moyer, Haywood, and Pettibone, of the Western Federation of Miners, and, knowing them to be innocent, falsely charging them with the murder of ex-Governor Steunenberg of Idaho, is stirring the workers of America with an indignation that will convulse the whole country should the execution of these innocent men be carried out.

During the Colorado strikes Steunenberg had acted like a ferocious brute broken loose. Under his direction miners were shot, maimed, and imprisoned in bull-pens. Even cases of violation of the defenceless women were connived at by him. No wonder, then, some unknown hand blew the wretch to pieces! And for this the American capitalists are demanding a sacrifice which recalls all the bloodthirsty infamies in the case of the Chicago martyrs.

We give below as fully as space will permit extracts that will show how splendidly our comrades in the United States are fighting the would-be murderers.

Wilshire's Magazine has been most indefatigable and courageous, and says (April, No. IV.):—

As Gov. Gooding, of Idaho, and his servile judges push onward the trial of the accused men, there is no telling how high public indignation may run. No one can say if this event may not be the spark which will inflame the American people to the inevitable Social Revolution.

The greatest crime against a free people in modern history is threatened in the trial of Haywood, Moyer and Pettibone for murder. No one who knows anything about the character of the men and the circumstances of the crime can believe that they were connected with the assassination of Gov. Steunenberg. The trial is merely an attempt on the part of the mine owners of Idaho and Colorado to intimidate the labor unions. They think that the hanging of the leaders will mean such a complete cowering of labor that capital will forever have it at its mercy. If the working class of America do not make their protest sufficiently vigorous to prevent the possibility of this judicial crime, then the execution of Haywood and Moyer may be the beginning of a series of executions of labour union leaders from one end of the country to the other.

The time for us to make our protest is now, and not after the men are in their coffins. If we wish to prevent the murder of the men who have been fighting for us, then the time for us to act is right here and now.

Let indignation meetings be held from Maine to California. Let money be collected. Let parades be made in our great cities, parades in such numbers that their immense size will intimidate the capitalist class from carrying out their infamous program.

If the trial proceeds, and if such a terrible event as conviction by the servile minions of plutocracy should follow, and if a single one of our comrades, Haywood, Moyer, or Pettibone, is condemned, it should be the signal for the working class of America to rise—let that mark the date for the beginning of a Great National General Strike. Let every working man who has a heart in his breast make a mighty oath that not a wheel shall turn in this country from ocean to ocean until the verdict is set aside and every one of the accused is set free. Let our factories be closed; let our mills stop grinding flour, and our bakeries stop baking bread. Let there be a complete paralysis of railway transportation and telegraphic information. Let our coal mines close, and let us die of hunger and cold if necessary to make our protest heeded.

The working class in this country have it in their power to say to the plutocracy, "You shall starve to death if a hair on the head of either Haywood, Moyer, or Pettibone is injured."

Let us show the world that the working men of America are not so lost to shame, not so devoid of the red blood of courage, that they will allow one of their comrades to suffer death at the hands of their enemies when they have at their command a weapon which will set him free.

Hurrah for the General Strike!

Eugene Debs in the *Liberator* (April 1st, No. 28) gives a magnificent call to arms:—

Charles Moyer and Wm. D. Haywood, of the Western Federation of Miners, and their official colleagues—men, all of them, and every inch of them—are charged with the assassination of ex-Governor Frank Steunenberg of Idaho, who simply reaped what he had sown, as a mere subterfuge to pounce upon them in secret, rush them out of the State by special train, under heavy guard, clap them into the penitentiary, convict them upon the purchased, perjured testimony of villains, and then strangle them to death with the hangman's noose.

It is a foul plot; a damnable conspiracy; a hellish outrage.

The Governors of Idaho and Colorado say they have the proof to convict. They are brazen falsifiers and venal villains, the miserable tools of the mine owners, who themselves, if anyone does, deserve the gibbet.

Personally and intimately do I know Moyer, Haywood, Pettibone, St. John, and their official co-workers, and I will stake my life on their honor and integrity; and that is precisely the crime for which, according to the words of the slimy "sleuth" who "worked up the case" against them, "they shall never leave Idaho alive."

Well, by the gods, if they don't the Governors of Idaho and Colorado and their masters from Wall Street, New York, to the Rocky Mountains had better prepare to follow them.

Nearly twenty years ago the capitalist tyrants put some innocent men to death for standing up for labor.

They are now going to try it again. Let them dare!

There have been twenty years of revolutionary education, agitation, and organization since the Haymarket tragedy, and if an attempt is made to repeat it there will be a revolution, and I will do all in my power to precipitate it.

The crisis has come and we have got to meet it. Upon the issue involved the whole body of organized labor can unite, and every enemy of

plutocracy will join us. From the farms, the factories and stores will pour the workers to meet the red-handed destroyers of freedom, the murderers of innocent men, and the arch-enemies of the people.

Moyer and Haywood are our comrades, staunch and true, and if we do not stand by them to the shedding of the last drop of blood in our veins we are disgraced for ever and deserve the fate of cringing cowards.

If they attempt to murder Moyer, Haywood, and their brothers, a million revolutionists, at least, will meet them with guns.

They have done their best and their worst to crush and enslave us. Their politicians have betrayed us, their courts have thrown us into jail without trial, and their soldiers have shot our comrades dead in their tracks.

The worm turns at last, and so does the worker.

Let them dare to execute their devilish plot, and every State in this Union will resound with the tramp of revolution.

Get ready, comrades, for action! No other course is left to the working class. Their courts are closed to us except to pronounce our doom. To enter their courts is simply to be mulcted of our meagre means and bound hand and foot; to have our eyes plucked out by the vultures that fatten upon our misery.

Capitalist courts never have done, and never will do, anything for the working class.

Common Sense, of Los Angeles, also prints a powerful appeal by Debs, and shows true revolutionary spirit in its fight for justice. Only that wretched trimmer, Samuel Gompers, in the *American Federationist* makes a feeble legal protest! Let him hold his tongue if he cannot speak like a man.

Let the Labour Unions of England watch this case, and let them be prepared, if the need should arise, to send their most powerful protest against an outrage which, if they are not active and alert, may some day be perpetrated nearer home.

TO THE GENERATION KNOCKING AT THE DOOR.

Break—break it open; let the knocker rust;
Consider no "shalt not," and no man's "must";
And, being entered, promptly take the lead,
Setting aside tradition, custom, creed;
Nor watch the balance of the huckster's beam;
Declare your hardiest thought, your proudest dream:
Await no summons; laugh at all rebuff;
High hearts and youth are destiny enough.
The mystery and the power enshrined in you
Are old as time and as the moment new:
And none but you can tell what part you play,
Nor can you tell until you make assay,
For this alone, this always, will succeed,
The miracle and magic of the deed.

JOHN DAVIDSON.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

France.

May Day is being looked forward to with keen expectancy by all parties, Parliamentary and otherwise. The authorities, to tell the truth, are perhaps more on the alert than the workers. But in France that is usually the case, the lively temperament and hot blood of the French worker being such that a mere bagatelle of a street fight may at any day or hour, if the time be ripe, develop into a revolution. So, in view of possible unpleasantness, police and Government are making arrangements to stifle May Day demonstrations, wherever possible. There is, for instance, a rumour that all the Bourses and Travail will be officially closed on that day, thus preventing these Union citadels from becoming a rendezvous for the Red Flag; while in Paris and other large cities troops will be in readiness to suppress anything in the shape of what the worthy Mayors may dub "disorder." Some months ago appeals and manifestoes were distributed in great numbers in every industrial centre, urging every worker on May 1st to drop his tool on the completion of eight hours' labour, and the question has been warmly discussed, debated, and in a sense universally accepted. But whether it will be universally acted upon remains to be seen. There are many difficulties in the adoption of such a plan, though the effect would be eminently picturesque. At present strikes are rapidly increasing throughout the country, and some look upon this as preliminary to many new First of May demands, of which an Eight Hour Day may be the chief. Unfortunately, many of the most ardent among the leading spirits are just now in prison as anti-militarists and so forth; still, a French "moyement" has much of the scorpion about it—cut off its head, there's always a tail left to sting Authority.

Meanwhile the miners are not to be pacified by promises or small concessions. There is no sign of their giving in; rather they are determined to fight both mine-owners and blacklegs fiercely. Around Lens the presence of the latter has led to riots; when the crowds were faced by prefect and general, loud cries of "Vive la Révolution!" arose. The house of one of the Lens mine directors has been stormed and wrecked, and stones, the only weapon as yet of the proletariat, rained on gendarme and trooper alike, Basly, the would-be political mediator, sharing the same fate, as also Clemenceau. The latter vows revenge, troops are pouring into the disturbed regions, and the libertarian Minister states that he will restore order with an iron hand. Once in Parliament, once in a Ministry, what libertarian is proof against circumstances? He drops his principles through force of environment, and then his honesty, for, having tasted the sweets of power, he is no longer man enough to relinquish them. The stone-throwing has resulted in the death of one or two military officers. A few more volleys of the miners' sole weapon, and Clemenceau will stand by and see them repaid with ball cartridge. He may not like to hear that volley, but he will not resign his seat in the Ministry because of it. Meanwhile Basly distributes circulars among the excited miners imploring them to behave themselves, to trust to him and the goodwill of the masters, and to throw out the Anarchists in their midst. Of course, it is the Anarchists who are at the bottom of all such troubles, never a mine-owner or political "boss."

So far the strikers, however, seem inclined to do their business their own way. One may regret certain acts done in the tumult of the moment—women hustled and their homes wrecked because the husband refuses to join his comrades—but the struggle against the tyranny of the employer is, and must be, a mass struggle if it is to win the day; and every worker, man or woman, who fails to see that after years of suffering must bear the penalty of cowardice.

About a thousand of the Paris postmen struck work as a protest against the Government denying their right to combine, but the movement was apparently immature, for in a few days they returned and through their wives and relatives made peace with the postal officials, the latter being lenient as they had been acutely harassed by the incompetency of the soldiers employed in their place. The main origin of the strike was the demand for higher wages. The Government refuses this (the men get £44 a year only), but promises to consider all legal demands. The right to a Union is not a legal demand, of course.

Close upon a hundred printing firms have been threatened with a strike in Paris alone, but in nearly every case the demands of the men were agreed to by the owners. At Fressenville the rich firm of Riquier, locksmiths, employing several hundred men, must regret they were less wise. For some months the relations between the firm and its workers have been strained owing to the rigid determination of the former to permit no Union nor to raise the average wage of 15 to 18 shillings per week. Discovering that one of their skilled men was a unionist, they gave him notice to leave, though he had worked nine years for them. His comrades were up in arms at once, and the secretary of his Union called to see the Riquiers:—He was simply told to "get out," which he did, but all the men followed him, and a strike was instantly proclaimed. Apparently the arrogance of the Riquier family had inflamed the passions of their employees; at all events, the beautiful country seat of the head of the family was burnt to the ground before the arrival of troops or police, and the Riquiers for the present have disappeared.

We are glad to state that our comrade Dr. Pierrot has now been released from prison, where after the seizure of the *Voix du Peuple* office in the *Bourse du Travail* he was sent for two weeks for having had the audacity to tell the police commissary employed that his was a dirty profession. "Believe me, I have no personal bias in this matter," the latter is reported to have explained at the trial, "but the honour of my tricolour scarf of office must be maintained!" By all means. But there is also a Red Flag whose honour must be maintained.

Pursuant to an order of the Swiss Government forbidding any foreigner to speak at an anti-militarist meeting held upon its enlightened soil, Comrade Girault, who had arranged to do that, was arrested and returned to his own country upon crossing the Swiss frontier lately. Knowing of the new order, he had disguised himself, besides taking other precautions. He was, therefore, considerably surprised at his arrest. Next time he and so many other trustful souls will perhaps be wiser, for "you see," smiled one of the officials, "we opened your letters in Switzerland, and knew just when to expect you." Where Anarchists are concerned there is no such thing as inviolability of the post office. Will comrades the world over bear that a little in mind? Switzerland, England—it matters not where—the name of every Anarchist who speaks, acts, or writes for the movement is posted up in the central office, and his correspondence at the mercy of the police and special sorters.

Russia.

The elections for the Duma farce still continue, without the nation at large taking the slightest interest in them, for, as the Czar declared recently, "my autocratic power will for evermore be no less than it has been," which is a roundabout way of saying, "Amuse yourselves, my children; I can cut off your heads whenever I choose." What the workers think of the coming Duma and its utility can be gleaned from their having elected a dog in one factory and a chimney-stack in another as their representatives. So far about 180 of these have been elected, all calling themselves more or less Liberal Constitutionals. A magnificent hall is being prepared for them in St. Petersburg, and there the Duma puppets will shortly open their first session. But, as already stated, the workers have too much common-sense to interest themselves in such a mockery of the electioneering principle, for in every case where a Socialist or ultra-Liberal was their choice he was struck off the list by the authorities as incompetent. As yet the reactionists carry all before them; the prisons are choked, and police and Cossack atrocities pass unheeded by those in power, as also by the outer world, which chronicles without comment, as though satiated with the daily horror of it. From a private letter we quote:—"E— told us how his daughter, the handsomest girl in L—, was killed by Cossacks when she ran to help her newly-married husband as he was being clubbed to death in the street. She had only just left the house to buy flowers for the dinner-table, when, for some reason known only to themselves, the Cossacks made a rush at the passers-by. She was E—'s only daughter, and they mutilated her to such a degree, even cutting off her fingers for the sake of the rings, that she lay unrecognised for two days. These things will never be forgotten, never forgiven. Our turn will come." It has at least come for the Cossack officer Abramoff, who tortured Mlle. Spiridonova for hours, with the help of a police officer, upon her arrest after shooting General Louzhenovsky, the military Governor of Tambov, whose cruelty to the peasants had aroused acute feeling. Abramoff was fired at and killed by unknown avengers two weeks ago. In his endeavours to make his hapless prisoner disclose the names of her accomplices, the brute destroyed one of her eyes: She now lies under sentence of death, but is likely to be sent to Siberia instead.

The authorities seem to revel in brutality and bloodshed. Nowhere is there an effort made to pacify or conciliate the people. Nicholas has sealed himself up in Tsarskoe Selo, the Dowager-Empress and, it is rumoured, the baby Czarevitch are in England or on the Continent, such is the imperial fear of the hatred aroused against all bearing the name of Romanoff on account of the senseless cruelty of Nicholas and his Ministers, cruelty which his Danish mother has so far not even denounced, and for which his innocent son will one day have to suffer. "The sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." Perhaps, though head of his church, the Czar has forgotten that old saying of the Scriptures in which he believes.

United States.

Until the earthquake of April 18th which devastated the Pacific slope, the one topic of interest in Labour circles has been the charge made against the Western Federation of Miners and the Union officials, President Moyer, Secretary Haywood, and Pettibone, now lying in an Idaho prison awaiting trial for alleged complicity in a series of outrages and murders culminating in that of ex-Governor "Bull-pen" Steunenberg (of *Coeur d'Alene* fame), who was killed by a bomb in December last. For more than a year Colorado and adjacent mining regions have been a battlefield of Capital and Labour, the one aim of Capital being to crush the Unions and their officials. The arrest of the above-named was due to the confession of a man named Orchard, who deposed to killing the Governor and dynamiting sundry non-Union miners. Orchard claims that he was hired by an "inner circle" of the Federation to commit these crimes and many similar ones, few of which failed to realise. As usual, the capitalist-fed Press howls for the gallows to put an end to the lives of the three men lying

in Boise City jail, and with Pinkerton detectives is busy piling up as much false evidence as is needful for the desired end. The victims themselves send brave words from their prison. They state that they are ready to die for the good of the Labour cause, that they are wholly innocent of the charges made against them, that nothing could have lured them to bring shame on the Federation. As regards the secret arrest and incarceration in another State of the accused, every point of law seems to have been broken, the whole procedure being illegal. Orchard, moreover, is a non-Unionist, and is stated to be a willing tool or agent of the Mine Owners' Association, which has for so long been trying to break the power of the Miners' Federation. As to the ultimate fate of the accused men, the feeling seems to be general that the mine-owners will do their utmost to get them hanged, by false evidence if necessary, rather than see the influence of the Union increased by the restoration to liberty of three maligned Socialists.

John Most's last words were highly characteristic of the man and his energy. He reached Cincinnati five days before his death, and he was then ailing, to his friends more alarmingly ill. Still he would not give in. His travels had increased a severe cold, and shocking weather added to it. His strength quickly ebbed, but he was sure a few days' rest among his friends would enable him once again to start on his tour of "agitation." However, the end came quickly and peacefully. "Let me go out—I must go out to speak," were his last words, and with them he passed away. A large procession followed his body to the crematorium, and the ashes were later transferred to New York.

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