

# Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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MONTHLY: ONE PENNY.

## NOTES.

### A Pioneer of Prison Reform.

A statue to the memory of that excellent woman, Elizabeth Fry, has been erected in the central hall of the Old Bailey, of all places in the world. When she visited Newgate in 1813 she found 300 women herded in dirt and rags, with only the floor to sleep on. The wisacres of those days were convinced that such treatment was the best that could be given to "criminals," tried or untried. Anything more humane would only encourage them in their wickedness. The Countess of Dudley, speaking at the unveiling of the statue, remarked that in every age there had existed women gifted with perception far in advance of their times; which is only another way of saying that all those—men as well as women—who are fighting for progress have a never-ending struggle against ignorance, stupidity, and prejudice. The laws and the official minds maintained the abominations of those days as necessary checks on crime. It has proved to be an iniquitous blunder, and would not now be tolerated. But it is equally certain that the callous brutality which to-day argues in favour of the scaffold, the lash, and years of cruel and useless imprisonment, will very soon be regarded, nay, is already beginning to be regarded, with as much horror and disgust as are the horrors of a century ago. The cry that pioneers are in advance of their times is only a silly excuse of the lazy and apathetic, who don't wish to be troubled to make a change, and who, in reality, have been born too late.

### Lest we Forget.

In case the eulogy of Mrs. Fry should lead us to imagine we are progressing too rapidly in the right direction in the treatment of "criminals," the sentence on Frederick Stanley, recently tried at the London Sessions, comes in time to put a skid on the wheels of prison reformers. Here is a man, aged 42, who for the last 17 years has only been at liberty eleven months. We are not told the number of times he has been in and out of prison, but it is perfectly clear that stone walls have no "reforming effect" upon him. They never have upon any man; and if—as should have been done at the first offence—a decently human interest had been taken in the mental and physical condition of Stanley, and the many who are classed with him, it would have been known how far social conditions had driven him in his disastrous course, and how far the weakness of his character had contributed to the wrecking of his career. Instead of that he is brought up once more to receive a sentence of three years' imprisonment and ten years' detention for a burglary committed after all the previous punishments he had endured. The cruelty and folly of it all prove that prison reform, like other reforms, is too slow to keep pace with the awakening conscience of the age. Lloyd George has told us that hitherto the poor man's acquaintance with the law has mostly been the bludgeon of the policeman. And so it always will be while private property remains. To protect that, Frederick Stanley and thousands of others are tortured through life; and if it is necessary to give one more reason why a social revolution is necessary, we have it here.

### Waste!

"If you divide everything up," cry the blind leaders of the blind, "there will not be enough to go round." If the monopolists think this is any argument against the socialisation of wealth, it is at least a thousand times more powerful argument against the present system. Because we do not produce enough to supply all sufficiently, that is a reason for allowing more than one-third of the entire income of the United Kingdom to be appropriated by less than one-thirtieth of the population. If we had not all been educated as slaves, this reasoning would not hold good for five minutes outside of Colney Hatch. We

should insist that at any rate we would get as near equity as possible if we all had to live on five shillings a week. But there is another point ignored by the anti-Socialists—and unfortunately by many workers also—and that is the criminal waste or misdirection of human energy, as well as of the wealth produced. The instances of this are too numerous to mention, but one that may possibly go unobserved is worth quoting. The Southwark Guardians are complaining that they cannot get nurses to complete their staff. Now under present conditions nurses are vitally important, especially for the poor. Why can't the poor have them? Dr. Bruce gives the answer. Because they are being monopolised by rich ladies with imaginary ailments, and looking after their babies who already have every comfort. The *Daily News* heads this report "The Pampered Rich." Workers, when will you cease to "pamper"?

### A Miss for the Middleman.

A very promising development has arisen out of the building trades dispute through the action of the Theosophical Society in arranging direct with the Unions to complete the building they are having erected for their new quarters. This is what is beginning to be urged from many sides—that the men should take over, by direct action so to speak, the work which the contractor has hitherto controlled with the object of exploiting and crushing down labour till it should be just so much raw material in his hands. Our legislators are just awakening to the fact that the housing question really is of serious import both to the rural labourer and the town dweller. What more reasonable, practicable, and desirable than that these willing workers in the building trade should be erecting healthy and comfortable homes to end once for all the dreadful evils which it is admitted overcrowding is inflicting on thousands of families. Immorality, disease, and crime would be immediately lessened by a huge percentage if such a national scheme were once started. Why is it not started? Because this society of "mostly fools"—and rogues—is less concerned about the welfare of the exploited masses than about the rights of the landlord and capitalist to rob the worker. There is not and cannot be any other explanation. So, may this new step to eliminate the middleman have every success.

### A Blow for the Bigots.

Such bigotted reactionaries as the Bishop of London must be having a troubled time just now. He wants very much to "purify" London, and, as a means to this end, asks for more money to build more churches. Purification, it will be noted, is a costly process when the "cloth" takes the matter in hand. However, a reform that has been long overdue will be in operation next month, and from this, at any rate, a modicum of good will result. A system offering "free legal facilities" for the very poor is to be introduced, and among the 850 persons who have applied, 400 are for divorce. It may not please the Bishop to find that those "whom God hath joined together" can be so easily separated, but it will be a blessing in scores of cases—till economic freedom gives both men and women release from ill-assorted unions without an appeal to the law.

No man can realise his own worth or his own full development if he does not recognise the worth of his fellows, and in co-operation with them realise his own development through them. No man can emancipate himself unless at the same time he emancipates those around him.—*Bakunin*.

RECENTLY ENLARGED.

VOICE OF LABOUR.

WEEKLY, ONE HALFPENNY.

## THE MINERS' WAR IN COLORADO.

To write adequately about the war in Colorado, one should be a poet or a scientist. The latter could have his feelings sufficiently under control to analyse the matter coldly and dispassionately, and convince his readers by reason; the former could stir men's passions and make them act quickly, blindly perhaps, but, as so often happens in life, with an intuition that would be as unerring as it would be effective. Being neither poet nor scientist, the mass of material that confronts me is enough to fill a more trained writer with dismay.

The coal miners of Colorado have been striking off and on for seven years, but the present struggle began in September last, and has grown fiercer and fiercer, until it culminated in the terrible Ludlow massacre, with which, no doubt, all Europe is now familiar. The demands of the men which led to the strike were seven in number—

1. The eight-hour day.
2. Pay for narrow and dead work.
3. A checkweighman without interference of company official.
4. The right to trade in any store they pleased.
5. The abolition of the criminal guard system.
6. Ten per cent. advance in wages.
7. Recognition of the Union.

Professor Edward R. A. Seligman, of Columbia University, writing in the *Annalist*, a magazine of finance, commerce, and economics, of May 4, says:—

"Of these seven demands, five are guaranteed under severe penalty by the laws of the State of Colorado. It is claimed by the Union that had these laws been enforced there would never have been any strike. Whether or not this is so, is it not a remarkable commentary on the state of American civilisation that individuals should be compelled to resort to a strike in order to enforce a series of laws which it is the obligation of the employers to obey and the State to enforce? That these laws were habitually and persistently disregarded is claimed by the Unions, and is virtually substantiated by the official statements in the reports of the factory inspectors in Colorado."

He says a great deal more that is well worth quoting were we writing for a different set of readers and had more space at our disposal.

Each day brings with it fresh evidence of the savagery of the coal barons of Colorado and their chief here in New York—John D. Rockefeller, Jr. It compares with, if it does not surpass, the stories of the grand ladies of Paris poking their parasols into the wounds of the Communards as they lay helpless after the fall of the Commune. The *New York Daily Globe*, the oldest daily paper in the city, writes editorially as follows:—

"In regard to the Ludlow massacre, the Senate of Colorado, in a formal resolution, declares: 'Blame for the horror rests on the imported assassins who masqueraded as sons of Colorado in the uniform of the National Guard.' This declaration coincides with and emphasises previous findings by the coroner's jury and the Federal grand jury, and the practical confession of guilt by the military court that endeavoured to whitewash the tragedy. It is established that murder was committed at Ludlow—that the guardians of society, whose sworn duty was to protect the sheep, turned wolves and devoured their charges. In one of the companies of alleged militia that shot down and burned women and children were thirty mine guards—that is, mercenaries of the mining companies—and seventy were clerks, bosses, engineers, and others in the employ of the mining companies. This 'National Guard' company was never mustered into the State's service, never held a drill, never elected any officers, and never was paid by any one except the mining companies. Is it strange civil war broke out when government expressed itself in such form?"

As is customary in all such struggles, the coal capitalists of Colorado have lied persistently and deliberately about the strike; they lied to alienate sympathy from the strikers and cut off supplies, and when that failed, murdered their wives and children; and now lie to save themselves from the condemnation being vented upon them. A few weeks ago John D. Rockefeller, Jr., swore before a Congressional Committee that the strike was one of principle and could not be arbitrated. The principle was the "open shop," or, to put it another way, the right to keep the men divided so that they could be exploited more easily. The miners swear that recognition of the Union has not been the main issue; that they have been willing to arbitrate their differences ever since the strike began, and the employers have steadily refused.

Where the spirit of brutality has been as rampant as it is in Colorado, it would be idle to lay the blame entirely upon one man; but it is all but universally admitted that Rockefeller, Jr., is more responsible for the murder of innocent women and children, to say nothing of men, than all the other forces combined. From the date of his declaration before the committee at Washington, the struggle has grown in intensity, reaching its climax with the firing of the tent colony at Ludlow, where two women and ten children were burned or smothered to death. It was his insistence on unconditional surrender, and his statement that they—the Standard Oil interests—were prepared to lose all they had invested in Colorado rather than treat with the men on any other basis, that touched the magazine that lay ready for the match.

Wm. T. Stead once said the United States was so anxious to lead the world in everything, that it was leading it in crime. This was true, and it is equally true with regard to the bitterness and savagery displayed in its Labour struggles. Life here in the United States isn't worth a pound of powder, and it grows cheaper every day. Strikes have always been more brutal here than in Europe; but just

as the brutality in the treatment of the negro has grown worse in the last twenty years, so the treatment of men who dare to strike for better conditions has grown barbarous beyond belief.

In this case there is indisputable evidence that the tents were deliberately fired without regard to the safety of the women and children. When the coroner's jury, the Federal grand jury, and the Senate of Colorado find the militia guilty, they must be, without the faintest shadow of a doubt. Federal grand juries and State Senates have never been composed of working men or sympathisers with working men, and the evidence against this "National Guard" must have been so overwhelming that no other verdict was possible.

According to Press despatches from Colorado, and reports of investigating committees, more than one hundred lives have been lost up to date, which far surpasses any Labour struggle on this continent, and it makes even such struggles as Homestead and Hazleton pale into insignificance. As we see it, there are several very encouraging features in connection with the strike, and at least two very discouraging ones. One of the first is the perfectly open and frank manner in which the miners armed themselves, and even allowed themselves to be photographed with guns in hand and cartridge belts strapped around their waists. It must cheer the heart of every revolutionist to know the actual fighting was done largely by Greeks and Bulgarians fresh from the Balkan War. Bitter enemies a few months ago over what they conceived to be national rights, they stood side by side in the mountains of Colorado and fought the common enemy to a standstill. How strange is human nature, after all! Another very inspiring feature is the way the Colorado Unions responded with money, arms, and recruits. This last must be supplemented by the money sent from other parts of the country to Colorado.

The discouraging features are the failure of the Miners' Convention at Indianapolis to declare in favour of a general strike in support of their Colorado comrades, and the attitude of the Socialist Party over the affair. The failure of the miners to declare the general strike is due, no doubt, to the fact that they have no real conception of the class struggle. To protest against wage-slavery and capitalism in all forms is at present beyond them. The officials of the United Mine Workers have long been recognised as the most astute politicians in the Labour movement, and with an ex-miner (Secretary Wilson) in the Cabinet of President Wilson, it is more than possible that politics played its part in the report of the committee of the Convention against the general strike.

At the present writing, Federal troops are in control in the mine districts of Colorado, and a demand has been made on both miners and mine owners to surrender their arms. It is not expected that either side will surrender all their arms, and as the Federal troops cannot remain for ever, the fighting may be resumed as soon as they leave.

The mines in the disturbed districts are closed at present; for how long it is impossible to say. But the Rockefeller interests will soon be brought to bear on the Government, and under Federal surveillance an attempt will be made to open the mines, and it is a question of how far the miners will be awed by the fact that they are fighting the central Government instead of the local authorities. Libertarians know full well the heavy price that must be paid when Labour rebels against its exploiters, and it grieves us to think of the lives lost in this struggle; certain gains have been made, however, and for that we feel grateful. For the first time in the history of this country, and perhaps of any great nation, has the President of chief ruler sent openly to a capitalist and asked him to settle a strike, as President Wilson did to John D. Rockefeller Jr. That fact will assist in striking the scales from the eyes of many men.

The Socialists have disavowed all connection with the movement to send money, arms, and recruits to the assistance of the rebellious miners. They insult the dead in Colorado by telling the living that had they voted the Socialist ticket this would not have happened. Every form of activity except speech-making and voting is strictly taboo with the Socialists here, and their demoralisation is so complete that the German Socialist Party looks revolutionary beside them. The yeast is fermenting, however, and the revolutionary spirit grows in spite of the reactionaries. The immensity of the country makes it difficult to have united action on any subject, and more particularly revolutionary action on the part of the working class. The struggle grows more intense each day, and the sporadic revolts more and more frequent, and the final crash may be nearer than many of us dare hope for. That unrest on a gigantic scale exists even the dullest reactionary is forced to admit, and that society is being revolutionised is apparent to all. The coal strike of Colorado is but one of the many symptoms that the day of reckoning is fast approaching, the day when Labour will come into its own.

HARRY KELLY.

New York.

## God and the State.

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## INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

### France.

The General Elections are finished, and after the floods of promises, abuse, and lies, the different parties, who at the beginning all declared themselves winners, have to recognise that reaction, whether royalist, clerical, or militarist, has suffered a defeat. The United Socialist Party has gained 27 seats, and has now 102 members in Parliament; together with the Radicals and Radical-Socialists, they can form a respectable progressive "bloc" of 338, which means a majority in the Chamber of Deputies. This result has naturally been received with great jubilation by the Socialist Party. We would have wished them even more seats; the only way to convince them that direct action alone can emancipate the workers is to give the Parliamentarians full scope. In France, a strong Socialist Party in Parliament can make itself more felt by the Government than in Germany, where the Social Democratic Deputies are entirely ignored by the Government, which only consults the Kaiser and the Conservatives. But even in France, with its greater political freedom, a four years' trial at Parliamentarism will cool much of the ardour of the now confident Socialist Deputies. It is known that they gained their seats by pronouncing themselves against the three years' military service Act, and in favour of an income-tax. The second would have imposed itself by necessity, even without Socialist Deputies, because the extra military expenses can be met only by some special measures. No Socialist majority will save the people from having to pay this year's deficit of £50,000,000, which the militarists have succeeded in squandering, besides the usual tremendous Budget. The Socialists have further promised to repeal the three years' service Act in 1915, when it was to have entered into full force. But when that decisive moment comes, will not the German bogey be held up again by the Tsar before the eyes of his French ally, in order to frighten the French people into another insane increase of armaments? Will the Socialist Deputies stand firm and rescue the French youth from an extra year's barrack life?

According to the French Socialist papers, great things may be expected by the new force in Parliament. Apart from the Anarchists, we see from an article in the *Bataille Syndicaliste* by Dumoulin, of the Confederation of Labour, that the Syndicalists—at least, some of them—have kept their heads in this turmoil of election triumphs. The present jubilation, he says, reminds one of the time when Millerand was made a Minister—a Socialist Minister! All the eyes of the French proletariat were hopefully fixed on him. Will that disillusion not be ours again with this Socialist majority in Parliament? The success at the ballot-boxes, he states, has turned many an ambitious militant towards the party that has such political possibilities in its hand; a number of anti-Parliamentarians are turning their coats. But, when the ambitious and hesitating have gone over to the camp of seekers after office and security (championing the people's cause in the French Parliament gives incidentally a yearly income of 15,000 francs!), the workers will soon realise again that Parliament cannot fight their fight, that is for themselves to do so; and the task of organising, agitating, and fighting back the enemy inch by inch, day by day, will be taken up again by those who have the honesty and courage to proclaim and practise self-thinking and self-reliance.

It has been announced that the Tsar intends to visit Paris in the Autumn. We hope the workers of Paris, and in fact all honest people, will receive his Majesty the Russian Hangman with the honour due to him. The new police chief of Paris (Lepine having retired and sought election as a Deputy, was "beaten to a frazzle" by a Socialist candidate) will undoubtedly do his utmost to save the Russian despot any remembrance of disagreeable details, as a few thousand revolutionists hanged by his order, another few hundred thousands in prison and exile. But the Paris workers have unexpected means and ways of demonstrating their feelings. On May 11 a meeting was held in Paris to protest against the recent violent labour repression; at the end of the meeting a procession went to the U.S. Embassy and wrote in large red letters "Colorado" on its walls. As the *Temps Nouveau* says, a few hundreds of penny whistles go a long way to impress the Russian Hangman with the opinions of the Paris people about his crimes.

In the March issue of *FREEDOM*, our readers will have noticed that an Anarchist International Committee against Repression had been formed; it has now become an active organisation, and receives almost daily letters from all over the world, giving information of acts of repression, and also of other groups which have been formed elsewhere. It hopes to be able to shortly organise a world-wide simultaneous protest, but wants the aid of comrades everywhere, especially in England. Comrades willing to help in this matter are requested to write to L. Albert, *Temps Nouveau*, 4 Rue Broca, Paris, or to *Libertaire*, 15 Rue d'Orsel, Paris.

### Bohemia.

On April 11-13 the Congress of the Czech Anarchists took place in Prague. Thirty groups were represented by twenty-five delegates. It was decided to organise a federation of Czech Communist Anarchists, which will be a permanent organisation with statutes. Local conditions have led our comrades to this step, though they will take measures to safeguard the principle of autonomy. The Congress recommended comrades to take part in distributive Co-operative societies, in order to create productive Co-operative societies according to Communist

principles. Comrades Boreck and Dr. Wrbenky have begun to publish theoretical Anarchist books.

As Austria is still the stronghold of Catholicism, which is there one with the State, the Anarchists of Bohemia have decided to take part in the anti-clerical demonstrations on July 6, 1915, the anniversary of the death of Johann Huss, who 500 years ago was burned as a heretic. Our comrades will strike on that occasion, and draw the attention of the people to the modern martyr Ferrer, who also was a victim of the Roman Catholic Church. It is, of course, quite natural that the activity of the Czech Anarchists should be distinctly directed against that Church, as all children, whatever their parents' faith or lack of creed may be, are forced to learn the Catholic catechism and take part in religious ceremonies.

This Czech Anarchist Congress shows that, after a long period of stagnation, the Czech movement is again awakening, and a decided attempt at organised agitation will be made.

Two Czech delegates will come to the London International Anarchist Congress this Autumn.

### United States.

A new paper, *Land and Liberty*, has been started in California by William Owen, well known to Anarchist readers from the English page of *Regeneration*. On the staff of the new paper is also Har Dayal, the Hindu author whose expulsion from the United States is instigated by the British Government, which cannot in any other way put an end to a revolutionary Hindu paper published by Har Dayal in California. Though the British and United States Governments may not be great friends in other ways, when it comes to suppressing revolutionary ideas among their subjects they show a striking solidarity and willingness to give a helping hand. However, this time it seems that the British Government will not succeed at once, as Har Dayal, though "an undesirable Anarchist," has been three years in the States, and should be immune. The new paper intends to attack slavery at every vital point, but will not be hampered by any "ism." It will pay special attention to every action by the disinherited against Capitalism, State, and prejudice; and finally, help people to think for themselves. Address of paper: Hayward, California.

Another welcome appearance is that of the *Woman Rebel*, a monthly paper published at 34 Post Avenue, New York City. Its motto, "No gods, no masters," shows that the *Woman Rebel* is not revolting against a few phantom oppressors, but goes all the way, right to the end of emancipation. It will endeavour to build up within woman a conscious fighting character against all things which enslave her; above all, economic enslavement, the foundation of all other oppression.

## The Call of Spring to Labour.

It has been said that the exceptionally hot Summer of 1911 was an incidental cause of the big strikes which took place that year. This may well have been so, for when the train has been laid the merest spark sets it aflame. It is also a hopeful thought, for it denotes the possibility of the imagination of the workers being stirred more easily perhaps than would be conceived considering the cramped lives most of them lead.

So, then, who can gauge the results of the various influences at work, and may it not be that the spell of lovely weather we have had this Spring may bear far-reaching consequences? It surely must be that the seeds of revolt are swelling within those who have ever had an opportunity of tasting the delights of Nature at this season.

You, who live pent up in grimy houses in narrow streets, where the sunlight merely filters through, attenuated to a mere travesty of itself, do you not long for the open country where it lights up with glory the miraculous beauty of the newly green leaves, the waving bluebells, and the snow-white blossom! You, who breathe the petrol-laden air of town, do not your lungs pant for fresh, pure, scent-laden breezes?

You, whose eyes ache with the weariness of miles of bricks and mortar, do you not yearn for a vision of the woods, where the wild cherry lifts its snow-white blossom amidst the red-browns and greens of the newly bursting trees? You, whose ears are filled with a never-ceasing roar till silence becomes sound, do you not sigh for the quiet filled only with the song of birds and the rustling of trees and grasses? Will you not realise that it is possible for all to enjoy the tremendous beauty of Spring, and will you not labour that this possibility shall become fact—and that soon?

—Those others, however—and there are thousands who have never had a glimpse of the beauties of this wonderful world—in whom word-painting kindles no answering spark lit from the fires of memory, how shall you be awakened to longing? How shall vision be given to the blind?

Yet it may be with you, too, that Nature in her riotous moods shall stir some hidden depths, that to you also Spring shall make its call, and lead you to throw off your chains and achieve emancipation.

M. D.

ANARCHY.—A social theory which regards the union of order with the absence of all direct government of man by man as the political ideal.—*Century Dictionary*.

# Freedom

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## What is a Revolution?

A whole volume might be written in answer to Mr. Lloyd George's Budget speech, in which he warned the rich of the changes that had come over the minds and the spirit of the people during the past fifty years, and wherein he reminded the privileged classes that his one-and-fourpenny tax was "an insurance against revolution." He says, quite rightly, education has taught the masses that their misery does not result from a divine decree, but from "the mismanagement of man." That is rather a mild way of describing the terrible exploitation and robbery inflicted on the people through the centuries, and which has been supported and upheld by all Governments.

If the Education Acts of the last forty years have been responsible for "the revolt that is surging up around" the rich to-day, the trouble cannot be laid at the doors of the wicked Socialists and Anarchists. That seems quite clear. But what interests us far more than the question of responsibility—which, of course, lies at the door of the exploiting classes—is the idea of insuring the privileged few against revolution. Now, what, we wonder, does Mr. Lloyd George understand by this word "revolution"? We shall probably never know. It is clear, however, that, like most people who will not face the truth in all its bearings, he understands the need of revolutions as applied in other directions, but never to the bases of our present social system.

For instance, one can open a daily paper almost any morning and read of a revolution in shipbuilding, in locomotion, in electricity as applied to agriculture, in surgery, or the treatment of disease, in fact, in almost all directions of human activity; and no one is in the least alarmed, and quite respectable gentlemen write eulogistic articles on the progress being made, and the blessing to mankind, and all the rest of it. Even the *Observer*, speaking of recent inventions, "foreshadows a revolution in some of the most intimate conditions of existence." But let any one dare write to any of these same papers and suggest that a social revolution is necessary in order to end the misery and uncertainty of life, the degradation and abject slavery of so many millions, and his letter will never see the light.

These cowards dare not face the truth which the revolutionist is for ever dinning in their ears: that the exploitation of man by man is the root cause of our social misery and inequality, and that the government of man by man, which destroys all fraternity, follows as the inevitable consequence of the economic subjection of the people. And the reason they will not face it is because they realise clearly enough that if we are to have equality, if those who toil are to enjoy the wealth they create, then the great financiers and the great landlords, and the whole host of parasites who fatten on the unpaid labour of the workers, will have to live reasonable lives and do something useful to establish their right to share in the socialised wealth of the community.

Dreadful as it may sound to the ears of the idle rich, it is nevertheless an established truth that nothing can insure any society, or any institution of any society, from the inevitable forces of revolution. It is not possible, and it is not desirable. Would any of the so-called respectables, who shudder at the mere sound of the word, like to conjure up in their minds the probable condition we should be in at the present moment if revolutions had never taken place? Would the Nonconformists—of which Mr. Lloyd George is one—be enjoying the religious freedom they do, had it not been for the revolutionary teachings of Wycliff and

Huss, the defiance of Luther, who, to Leo X., must have seemed a dreadful Anarchist? Would the Radicals and democrats be enjoying the political liberty of to-day without the struggle of 1644 and the Revolution of 1688? And all those minor revolutions that have been fought for freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of the Press—where should we be without them?

The mind simply recoils from the thought of what human society would be like if man had never broken any of the chains of law and authority, if he had never revolted against the crushing tyranny of the feudalism of the past and the capitalism of the present. But the great and last revolution has yet to be fought and won, and it should be a cause of rejoicing for the down-trodden proletarians that Mr. Lloyd George can see its approach. He thinks perhaps, and no doubt honestly, that by State interference the gradual alleviation of the oppression of our miserable system may eventually transform it into something decent and human. Well, he is having a foretaste of what the "classes" are likely to do when the masses begin seriously to undertake the work of expropriation. They will resist; and they will not hesitate to shed the blood of the people to preserve their rights.

One thing, and one thing alone, can prevent a social revolution bringing the horrors that have happened in the past. And that is a complete solidarity of Labour, a clear vision of the object to be attained, and an unflinching use of the methods of Direct Action to prevent the murderous organisations of the dominant class from becoming effective in defeating the people. All these things can only be achieved by the intelligence and initiative of the people themselves. They will have to rely on the revolution, not on the Government, for, in spite of an old superstition, now happily dying, the latter has always been the great obstacle in the way of their complete emancipation. For as to the work of governments, no truer words than these of Thomas Buckle have ever been written: "Their measures are the result of social progress, not the cause of it. This may be proved, not only by speculative arguments, but also by a practical consideration, which any reader can verify for himself. No great political improvement, no great reform, either legislative or executive, has ever been originated in any country by its rulers."

So let us not be misled by the idea of any possible "insurance" of the dominant class against a necessary and inevitable revolution that is for the real welfare of all. Let us rather use our utmost endeavours to insure the revolution against the reactionaries, who would, if they could, destroy all the good fruit humanity is still waiting to enjoy as the harvest of its long, long struggles.

## Michael Bakunin.

Most centenarians, even when born much later and still among us, are but dried-up relics of a remote past; whilst some few, though gone long since, remain full of life, and rather make us feel ourselves how little life and energy there is in most of us. These men, in advance of their age, prepared new ways for coming generations, who are often but too slow to follow them up. Prophets and dreamers, thinkers and rebels they are called; and of those who, in the strife for freedom and social happiness for all, united the best qualities of these four descriptions, Michael Bakunin is by far the best known. In recalling his memory, we will not forget the many less known thinkers and rebels, very many of whom from the "thirties" to the early "seventies" of last century had, by personal contact, their share in forming this or that part of his personality. None of them, however, had the great gift of uniting into one current of revolt all the many elements of revolutionary thought, and that burning desire to bring about collective revolutionary action which constitute Bakunin's most fascinating characteristics. Courageous and heroic rebels always existed, but their aims were too often very narrow: they had not overcome political, religious, and social prejudices. Again, the most perfect "systems" were worked out theoretically; but these generous thinkers lacked the spirit to resort to action for their realisation, and their methods were lame, meek, and mild. Fourier waited for years for a millionaire to turn up who would hand him the money to construct the first Phalanstery. The Saint-Simonians had their eyes on kings or sons of kings who might be persuaded to realise their aims "from above." Marx was content to "prove" that the decay of Capitalism and the advent of the working classes to power will happen automatically.

Among the best known Socialists, Robert Owen and Proudhon, Blanqui and Bakunin, tried to realise their ideas by corresponding action. Blanqui's splendid "No God, no Master," is, however, counteracted by the authoritarian and narrow political and nationalist character of his practical action. Both Owen and Proudhon represent, as to the means of action, the method of *free experimentation*, which is, in my opinion, the only one which holds good aside of the method of *individual and collective revolt* advocated by Bakunin and many others. Circumstances—the weakness of small minorities in face of the brute force of traditional authority, and the indifference of the great mass of the

population—gave as yet no chance to either method to show its best, and, the ways of progress being manifold, neither of them may ever render the other quite superfluous. These experimental Socialists and Anarchists, then, are neither superior nor inferior, but simply different, dissimilar from Bakunin, the fiercest representative of the idea of real revolutionary action.

His economics are not original; he accepted willingly Marx's dissection of the capitalist system; nor did he dwell in particular on the future methods of distribution, declaring only the necessity for each to receive the full produce of his labour. But to him exploitation and oppression were not merely economic and political grievances which fairer ways of distribution and apparent participation in political power (democracy) would abolish; he saw clearer than almost all Socialists before him the close connection of all forms of *authority*, religious, political, social, and their embodiment, *the State*, with economic exploitation and submission. Hence, *Anarchism*—which need not be defined here—was to him the necessary basis, the essential factor of all real Socialism. In this he differs fundamentally from ever so many Socialists who glide over this immense problem by some verbal juggle between "Government" and "administration," "the State" and "society," or the like, because a real desire for freedom is not yet awakened in them. This desire and its consequence, the determination to revolt to realise freedom, exists in every being; I should say that it exists in some form and to some degree in the smallest particle that composes matter, but ages of priest- and State-craft have almost smothered it, and ages of alleged democracy, of triumphant Social Democracy even, are not likely to kindle it again.

Here Bakunin's Socialism sets in with full strength: mental, personal, and social freedom to him are inseparable—*Atheism, Anarchism, Socialism* an organic unit. His Atheism is not that of the ordinary Freethinker, who may be an authoritarian and an anti-Socialist; nor is his Socialism that of the ordinary Socialist, who may be, and very often is, an authoritarian and a Christian; nor would his Anarchism ever deviate into the eccentricities of Tolstoi and Tucker. But each of the three ideas penetrates the other two and constitutes with them a living realisation of freedom, just as all our intellectual, political, and social prejudices and evils descend from one common source—*authority*. Whoever reads "God and the State," the best known of Bakunin's many written expositions of these ideas, may discover that when the scales of religion fall from his eyes, at the same moment also the State will appear to him in its horrid hideousness, and anti-Statist Socialism will be the only way out. The thoroughness of Bakunin's Socialist propaganda is, to my impression, unique.

From these remarks it may be gathered that I dissent from certain recent efforts to revindicate Bakunin almost exclusively as a *Syndicalist*. He was, at the time of the International, greatly interested in seeing the scattered masses of the workers combining into trade societies or sections of the International. Solidarity in the economic struggle was to be the only basis of working-class organisation. He expressed the opinion that these organisations would spontaneously evolve into federated Socialist bodies, the natural basis of future society. This automatic evolution has been rightly contested by our Swiss comrade Bertoni. But did Bakunin really mean it when he sketched it out in his writings of elementary public propaganda? We must not forget that Bakunin—and here we touch one of his shortcomings—seeing the backward dispositions of the great masses in his time, did not think it possible to propagate the whole of his ideas directly among the people. By insisting on purely economic organisation, he wished to protect the masses against the greedy politician who, under the cloak of Socialism, farms and exploits their electoral "power" in our age of progress!

He also wished to prevent their falling under the leadership of sectarian Socialism of any kind. He did not wish them, however, to fall into the hands and under the thumbs of Labour leaders, whom he knew, to satiety, in Geneva, and whom he stigmatised in his *Egalité* articles of 1869. His idea was that among the organised masses interested in economic warfare thoroughgoing revolutionists, Anarchists, should exercise an invisible yet carefully concerted activity, co-ordinating the workers' forces and making them strike a common blow, nationally and internationally, at the right moment. The secret character of this inner circle, *Fraternité* and *Alliance*, was to be a safeguard against ambition and leadership. This method may have been derived from the secret societies of past times; Bakunin improved it as best he could in the direction of freedom, but could not, of course, remove the evils resulting from every infringement of freedom, however small and well-intentioned it may be in the beginning. This problem offers wide possibilities, from dictatorship and "democratic" leadership to Bakunin's invisible, preconcerted initiative, to free and open initiative, and to entire spontaneity and individual freedom. To imitate Bakunin in our days in this respect would not mean progress, but repeating "a mistake of the past."

In criticising this secret preconcerted direction of movements, considered worse than useless in our time, we ought not to overlook that the then existing reason for making such arrangements has also nearly gone. To Bakunin, who participated in the movements of 1848-49, in the Polish insurrection in the early "sixties," in secret Italian movements, and who, like so many, foresaw the fall of the French Empire and a revolution in Paris, which might have happened under better auspices than the Commune of 1871—to him, then, an international Socialist '89 or '48, a real social revolution, was a tangible thing which might really happen before his eyes, and which he did his best to really bring about by secretly influencing and co-ordinating local

mass movements. We in our sober days have so often been told that all this is impossible, that revolutions are hopeless and obsolete, that, with few exceptions, no effort is ever made, and the necessity of replacing semi-authoritarian proceedings like that of Bakunin by the free play of individual initiative or other improved methods, never seems to arise.

Bakunin's best plans failed from various reasons, one of which was the smallness of the means which the movements, then in their infancy, offered to him in every respect. Since all these possibilities are a matter of the past, let me dwell for a moment on the thought of what Bakunin would have done had he lived during the First of May movements of the early "nineties" or during the Continental general strike efforts of the ten years next following. With the tenth part of the materials these movements contained, which exploded some here, some there, like fireworks, in splendid isolation, Bakunin would have attacked international Capitalism and the State everywhere in a way never yet heard of. And movements which really create new methods of successful struggle against a strong Government, like the Suffragette and the Ulster movements, would never have let him stand aside in cool disdain, because their narrow purpose was not his own. I fancy he would never have rested day and night until he had raised the social revolutionary movement to the level of similar or greater efficiency. To think of this makes one feel alive; to see the dreary reality of our wise age lulls one to sleep again. I am the last one to overlook the many Anarchists who sacrificed themselves by deeds of valour—the last also to urge others to do what I am not doing myself: I merely state the fact that with Bakunin a great part of faith in the revolution died, that the hope and confidence which emanated from his large personality were never restored, and that the infinite possibilities of the last twenty-five years found many excellent comrades who did their best, but none upon whose shoulders the mantle of Bakunin has fallen.

What, then, was and is Bakunin's influence?

It is wonderful to think how he arose in the International at the right moment to prevent the influence of Marx, always predominant in the Northern countries, from becoming general. Without him, dull, political, electioneering Marxism would have fallen like mildew also on the South of Europe. We need but think how Cafiero, later on the boldest Italian Anarchist, first returned to Naples as the trusted friend and admirer of Marx; how Lafargue, Marx's son-in-law, was the chosen apostle of Marxism for Spain, etc. To oppose the deep-laid schemes of Marx, a man of Bakunin's experience and initiative was really needed; by him alone the young movements of Italy and Spain, those of the South of France and of French-speaking Switzerland, and a part of the Russian movement, were welded together, learnt to practise international solidarity, and to prepare international action. This alone created a lasting basis for the coming Anarchist movement, whilst everywhere else the other Socialist movements, described as Utopian and unscientific, had to give way to Marxism, proclaimed as the only *scientific* doctrine! Persecutions after revolutionary attempts often reduced these free territories of Anarchism to a minimum; but when Italy, Spain, and France were silenced, some corner in Switzerland where Bakunin's seed had fallen always remained, and in this way, thanks to the solid work of Bakunin and his comrades, mainly from 1868 to 1874, Anarchy was always able to face her enemies and to revive.

The immediate influence of Bakunin was reduced after he had retired from the movement in 1874, when certain friends left him; bad health—he died in June, 1876—prevented him continuing his work with fresh elements gathered round him. Soon after his death a period of theoretical elaboration began, when the methods of distribution were examined and *Communist* Anarchism in its present form was shaped. In those years also, after the failure of many collective revolts, the struggle became more bitter, and individual action, propaganda by deed, was resorted to, a proceeding which made preconcerted secret arrangements in Bakunin's manner useless. In this way, both his economic ideas, *Collectivist* Anarchism, and his favourite method of action alluded to, became so to speak obsolete, and were neglected.

Add to this that from about 1879 and 1880 Anarchism could be openly propagated on a large scale in France (mainly in Paris and in the Lyons region). This great extension of the propaganda gave so much new work, a new spirit entered the groups, soon arts and science were permeated with Anarchism—Elisée Reclus' wonderful influence was at work. In Bakunin's stormy days there was no time for this, through no fault of his. In short, Anarchism in France and in many other countries was in its vigorous *youth*, a period when the tendency to look ahead is greatest, and the past is neglected like a cradle of infancy. For this reason, and because very little information on Bakunin was accessible to the Anarchists of the "eighties," Bakunin's influence in those years remained small. I ought to have mentioned that certain opinions of Bakunin's gained much ground in the Russian revolutionary movement of the "seventies" and later, but cannot dwell further on this.

In 1882, Reclus and Cafiero published the choicest extract from the many manuscripts left by Bakunin: "Dieu et Etat" (God and the State), a pamphlet which B. R. Tucker fortunately translated into English (1883 or 1884). This or its English reprint circulated in England when no other English Anarchist pamphlet existed, and its radical Anarchist freethought or thoroughly freethinking Anarchism certainly left lasting marks on the early Anarchist propagandists, and will continue to do so. Of course, the same applies to translations in many countries.

About 1896, a considerable part of Bakunin's correspondence was

published, preceded and followed by many extracts from his unpublished manuscripts, a part of which is now before us in the six volumes of the Paris edition of his works. It became possible, with the help of these and many other sources, to examine his life in detail, and in particular to give proofs in hand, the story of the great struggle in the International, and to scatter the calumnies and lies heaped up by the Marxist writers and the bourgeois authors who followed them.

All this brought about a revival in the interest for Bakunin; but is there not a deeper cause for such a revival? When Bakunin was gone, his friends felt perhaps rather relieved, for the strain he put on their activity was sometimes too great for them. We in our times, or some of us, at least, are perhaps in the opposite situation: there is no strain at all put on us, and we might wish for somebody to rouse us. Thus we look back at any rate with pathetic sympathy on the heroic age of Anarchism, from Bakunin's times to the early "nineties" in France. Many things have happened since then also—I need but recall Ferrer's name; but, in my opinion at least, a complacent admiration of Syndicalism has too often replaced every thought of Anarchist action. I say again: it is preposterous to think that Bakunin would have been a Syndicalist and nothing else—but *what he would have tried to make of Syndicalism*, how he would have tried to group these and many other materials of revolt and to lead them to action, this my imagination cannot sketch out, but I feel that things would have gone otherwise, and the capitalists would sleep less quietly. I am no admirer of personalities, and have many faults to find with Bakunin also on other grounds; but this I feel, that where he was rebellion grew round him, whilst to-day, with such splendid material, rebellion is nowhere. South Africa, Colorado, are ever so hopeful events; but think what a Bakunin would have made of them—and then we can measure the value of this man in the struggle for freedom.

N.

## BAKUNIN CENTENARY CELEBRATION.

The centenary of the birth of Michael Bakunin (May 20, 1814) was celebrated by a gathering of comrades and friends at the Eustace Miles Restaurant, Chandos Street, W. There was a good attendance, but, as the meeting clashed with one at the East End, speakers were not plentiful. Frank Kitz, who took part in the Socialist movement in its early days in this country, said that Bakunin's teachings were of great value in checking the State Socialist ideas of the Marxian Socialists. He also spoke of the great difficulties of propaganda in those days compared with the present time.

A very interesting letter from Peter Kropotkin was read to the meeting, and is printed below. A splendid article was sent by our comrade Max Nettlau, who has made a special study of Bakunin's life and work; this, however, was too long to read to the gathering, but appears in this issue.

A very pleasant musical programme was contributed to by the children of the Modern School and other comrades.

### P. KROPOTKIN'S LETTER.

DEAR COMRADES,—I am so sorry that I cannot be with you for the commemoration of the birthday of our great teacher, Mikhail Bakunin. There are few names which ought to be as dear to the revolutionary working men of the world as the name of this apostle of the mass revolt of the proletarians of all nations.

Surely, none of us will ever think of minimising the importance of that labour of thought which precedes every Revolution. It is the conscience of the wrongs of society, which gives to the downtrodden and oppressed ones the vigour that is required to revolt against those wrongs.

But, with immense numbers of mankind, quite an abyss lies between the *comprehension* of the evils, and the *action* that is needed to get rid of these evils.

To move people to cross this abyss, and to pass from grumbling to action, was Bakunin's chief work.

In his youth, like most educated men of his times, he paid a tribute to the vagaries of abstruse philosophy. But he soon found his way at the approach of the Revolution of 1848. A wave of social revolt was rising then in France, and he flung himself heart and soul into the turmoil. Not with those politicians who already prepared to seize the reins of power, as soon as monarchy would fall under the blows of the revolted proletarians. He foresaw, he knew already, that the new rulers would be *against* the proletarians the moment they would be at the head of the Republic.

He was with the lowest masses of the Paris proletarians—with those men and women whose vague hopes were already directed towards a Social, Communistic Commonwealth. Here he represented the so-much-needed link between the advanced parties of the Great Revolution of 1793 and the new generation of Socialists; a giant trying to inspire the generous but much too pacific Socialist proletarians of Paris with the stern daring of the *sans-culottes* of 1793 and 1794.

Of course, the politicians soon saw how dangerous such a man was for them, and they expelled him from Paris before the first

barricades of February, 1848, had been built. He was quite right, that bourgeois Republican Cossidière, when he said of Bakunin: "Such men are invaluable *before* the Revolution. But when a Revolution has begun—they must be shot." Of course they must! They will *not* be satisfied with the first victories of the middle classes. Like our Portuguese worker friends, they will want to obtain some immediate practical results *for the people*. They will want that every one of the downtrodden masses should feel that a new era has come for the ragged proletariat.

Of course, the bourgeois must shoot such men, as they shot the Paris workers in 1871. In Paris, they took the precaution of expelling him before the Revolution began.

Expelled from Paris, Bakunin took his revenge at Dresden, in the Revolution of 1849; and here his worst enemies had to recognise his powers in inspiring the masses in a fight, and his organising capacities. Then came the years of imprisonment in the fortress of Olmütz, where he was chained to the wall of his cell, and in the damp casemates of the St. Petersburg and Schlüsselburg fortresses, followed by years of exile in Siberia. But in 1862 he ran away from Siberia to the United States, and then to London, where he joined the friends of his youth—Herzen and Ogaroff.

Heart and soul he threw himself into supporting the Polish uprising of 1863. But it was not until four years later that he found the proper surroundings and ground for his revolutionary agitation in the International Working Men's Association. Here he saw masses of workers of all nations joining hands across the frontiers, and striving to become strong enough in their Unions to throw off the yoke of Capitalism. And at once he understood what was the chief stronghold the workers had to storm, in order to be successful in their struggle against Capital—the State. And while the political Socialists spoke of getting hold of power in the State and reforming it, "*Destroy the State!*" became the war-cry of the Latin Federations, where Bakunin found his best friends.

The State is the chief stronghold of Capital—once its father, and now its chief ally and support. Consequently, *Down with Capitalism and down with the State!*

All his previous experience and a close friendly intercourse with the Latin workers made of Bakunin the powerful adversary of the State and the fierce revolutionary Anarchist Communist fighter he became in the last ten years of his life.

Here Bakunin displayed all the powers of his revolutionary genius. One cannot read his writings during those years—mostly pamphlets dealing with questions of the day, and yet full of profound views of society—without being carried away by his powerful argumentation, and without being fired by the force of his revolutionary convictions. In reading these writings and in following his life, one understands why he so much inspired his friends with the sacred fire of revolt.

Down to his last days, even amidst the pangs of a mortal disease, even in his last writings, which he considered his testament, he remained the same firmly convinced revolutionary Anarchist and the same fighter, ready to join the masses anywhere in their revolt against Capital and the State.

Let us, then, follow his example. Let us continue his work, never forgetting that two things are necessary to be successful in a revolution—two things, as one of my comrades said in the trial at Lyons: an idea in the head, and a bullet in the rifle! The force of action—guided by the force of Anarchist thought.

P. KROPOTKIN.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### NATURE NEVER CAN BE EXHAUSTED.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—I am sure that your correspondent, "M. N.," would be the last to play into the hands of the enemies of the workers—the land monopolists—and yet that is what he practically does when he affirms that there is an "increasing disproportion between the population and the natural resources of the globe." There never has been and there never can be such a thing; but Malthus, who wrote on behalf of the monopolists of his day, accounted for poverty in this way; indeed, went so far as to say that no one had a right to enter this world unless he was well provided for by his parents, and that otherwise the sooner he received the happy despatch the better.

Surely Henry George has sufficiently disposed of this horrible theory in "Progress and Poverty," which I am glad to see Peter Kropotkin quoting. If working men would study that book, they would understand what real Anarchism is and the blessing it is. You cannot exhaust Nature. There is enough for each, enough for all, and enough for evermore. Malthusianism lies at the root of all the senseless and expensive palliatives of the present day; it is the inspiration of this year's Budget; but it is nevertheless a blasphemous lie, invented for the purpose of bolstering up the privileged classes; and I trust none of your readers will be beguiled by it.—Yours fraternally,

St. Anne's-on-the-Sea.

JOHN BAGOT.

The receipt of a free copy of this paper is an invitation to subscribe. 1s. 6d. per annum.

## A PRIMER OF ANARCHISM.

## III.—WORK AND WEALTH.

All the things that go to keep up the life of man have to be made by work. The sum of all these things is what we call wealth. All wealth bears the stamp of work; that is to say, no work, no wealth. So, if a man has wealth which he did not work for, or no one gave to him of his own free will, that would be what we call theft, for there are but three known ways to get wealth: these are, by work, gift, or theft. Now those whom we call the rich, who scorn work and look down on those who toil, own by far the best part of the wealth of the world. These are the thieves who rule and rob all who work. There is no need for me to write a long string of words in proof of all this. As I state it, in short, plain words, it stands out as a truth that all may see, like the light of the sun.

All wealth is made by work. Then why do not all they who work own all wealth? First of all, the stuff of which all wealth is made—that is, the land, and all that grows in it and on it—is said to be in the hands of a class of drones. At least, we who work stand by and let these drones claim the sole right to own it. The first cause that makes men slaves is the fact that the sole claim to own the land on which they stand is in the hands of land lords. These lords of the land claim the right to charge us rent for the right to be on the earth. This rent must be paid in cash. To get the cash, since we do not make it, we must go to work for those who have it; and the sole terms on which the men who have the cash will let us work is for us to give up all the wealth that we make for a sum in cash which will not buy more than one fourth of the goods we have made. Thus they whom we work for rob us of at least three fourths of the wealth of our work. Out of what is left we have to pay for food, clothes, and rent for a place to rest in.

Now the whole force of the State stands by to keep up this form of theft. It is the State's means of life. The first act of the State is a theft, when it takes a tax from those who toil. It does all this at the point of the sword. If the sword is not struck at us, it just means that, like sheep, the State may fleece us.

From time to time men have thought out plans by which they may get back some of the wealth which their work has made. But none of these plans have, as yet, "made good." The cause of this is that none of them has gone straight to the point. The scheme which has been most in vogue is for the men who work in trades to join in a mass and strike for more pay. These strikes have been fought with great strength of will. Funds have been spent, and blood has been shed, but all to no good for the slaves. The main fault of the strike for more pay is that a rise in pay means a rise in price, and we who work pay the price all the time! What boots it that we force a rise in pay from the boss for our work, so long as he can force a rise in the price of the wealth we have made, which he owns, and we have to buy? The fact that he, and not we, can put a price on all the wealth we make is all that needs to make us slaves?

For us to get the wealth that our work has made, we first of all have to get the land free of rent. Some say that the way to get the land free for those who work would be to tax those who own the land, so that it would not pay them to own more land than they can live on; and thus the large tracts of land which now have a fence thrown round them by those who claim the sole right to own them would be free for those who now have no land to live and work on.

What weak wills most of us have in these things! Here is a plain case of theft of the worst kind. The land, which no man has made, and yet all men must use, is said to be in the hands of a few who claim to own it. With the aid of the State, we are "held up" all through our lives, and made to pay vast sums in the form of rent. And then we are told that the way to free the land is to tax those who claim to own it! The way to stop the theft of rent, they think, is to make those who own the land pay a tax! We should say that such a scheme would do no more than raise the rent, since the claim to own the land is still to stay as it is. And, if a tax is put on those who own land, they will dodge it in less than no time, so to speak; for all they have to do is to sell their land, and, with the cash, buy shares. Do you think they would lose by such a plan? We who work would still be the slaves of the rich thieves. The plain fact is, that if we who work want the wealth that we make, we must put down the sole claims to own both land and wealth on the part of the rich drones. The first thing to do is to cease to pay rent. All we who work must make up our minds to pay no more rent, when, and not till that comes to pass, the land will be free for all those who work. This is the straight way to our goal; and the straight way is the right way as well as the short way.

This is bold talk, you may say, in view of the force that stands by to aid the land thieves who rob us in the name of rent. There are those who say: "It is quite true that the rich did steal the land from the poor, but that was more years since than we can count, and in the course of time we have come to look on rent as a thing that must be paid; and then, of course, there is the man in blue, with his club, and the man in red, with his gun; there is the jail and what not for those who say, 'We will pay no more rent!'" So these good but faint folk turn this way and that, and think that they see a way out in the "great speech" of So and So, M.P., on "The Land for All!" Some of them have read the big book of George (not Lloyd George), which

tells how to tax the land out of the hands of the rich, and to pay all the debts of the State out of the tax; as if it were not the poor, all the time who have had the land in their hands, so much so, in fact, that all through their lives their hands bear the marks of the grime of the soil. No, we want more than to be free to use the land. We want it rent free. It is the rent we want to get rid of. That is what makes us poor. We pay it, and that is what makes the thieves rich.

As I have said: we must make up our minds to pay no more rent. We have to get that thought well set in our heads, all we who work; we must think of it, talk of it at all times when we meet, make our plans, and when the time comes, when that seed thought has been well sown, when it has grown in our minds from a seed thought to a deed thought, and we who say, "Down with Rent!" have grown to a mass too large for the State to cope with, then will be the time for us to strike our first blow for the free life.

WILLIAM J. ROBINS.

## SIDELIGHTS ON SOCIAL SUBJECTS.

Dr. Mott, pathologist to the London County Asylums, has made an interesting discovery. He says:—

"The self-made man is often the first step in the process of degeneration; and the first evidence of degeneracy in a family is the selfishness and meanness, or the cunning, avarice, and moral guile, by which the self-made man succeeds in amassing a fortune for his still more degenerate children to spend in gratifying their selfish desires. The family seems to be on the up-grade because, in one generation, it makes a worldly success; but this success is a sign of disease rather than of health, and soon the disease has not even success to conceal it."

The *Times*, in commenting upon this statement, passes some severe criticism upon our old friend Samuel Smiles, claiming that our morality is very incongruous with his, and it tells us that—

"This strength which he worshipped is not strength at all, but weakness, both moral and physical; the energy which produces worldly success is often the energy of fever rather than of health, and of a fever which leaves a stock exhausted, as ordinary fever exhausts the individual body. The normal healthy man has not a passion for success. Rather he is interested in many concrete things; and these diverse interests of his, while they give him happiness, distract him from the concentration that is necessary to success of any kind, whether it be high or low."

When the *Times* pens such lines, it makes us begin to wonder whether the revolution is not much nearer than ever we in our wildest moments imagined; but we fear that though this organ of bourgeois thought has apparently its inspired moments, yet it has not shown the courage of following its revolutionary remarks to their logical conclusion. We contend that no capitalist paper dare do so, for the man behind our "free" press is none other than the self-made variety, grown indeed more rotund since the days of Samuel Smiles. Nevertheless, we must encourage the efforts of our contemporary, and congratulate Dr. Mott on his outspoken denunciation of the most pathetic figure in present-day life.

Much paper has been wasted upon the issue of the report as to whether sex hygiene should be taught in our elementary schools. The verdict is, that in no circumstances should it be introduced into class teaching. The reason given for this decision is that the excessive poverty of the children's parents makes overcrowding the rule. Where parents and children live in one room, in which all the events of life and death take place, the knowledge of the children must be very different from that of children who come from a home where they are carefully guarded. After such an indictment, one would naturally look for a revolutionary proposal; but the alternative suggested shows a lack of vision and courage. The attention of the Parks and Small Holdings Committee, and all other authorities responsible for open spaces in and around London, is to be drawn to the moral dangers arising from insufficient supervision, and, finally, they recommend the expenditure of a sum not exceeding £30 for the purpose of warning young girls of the dangers that beset the path of the virtuous in our God-ordained society.

To acquiesce in the herding of human beings in filthy, infamous buildings where decent life becomes an impossibility, and then pretend to try to save the morals of the poor, perverted, stunted human wreckage which emerges therefrom, is typical of our hypocritical exponents of the Manchester School of thought. £30 to be expended. What grim irony! When will these learned persons understand that, given the chance of living free, healthy, happy, natural lives, the morals of the school children will take care of themselves. Cease to starve, distort, and punish, and allow the young lives to expand naturally, and the chances are that perverted, diseased, and abnormal minds will tend to regain their balance.

Despite the optimism of Lloyd George when introducing his famous Budget, Labour finds itself growing steadily poorer, for although increases in wages were given during the month of April, the actual decreases affected more than four times as many workers. And all the time the rich are graciously taking credit unto themselves for bearing taxation "for the benefit of the poor"—buoyed up, of course, by Lloyd George's assertion that "a time will come when they will look back with amazement and regret at the days when they protested against a one-and-fourpenny extra insurance against revolution." So they bravely shoulder their burdens, and accept the position with the resignation of

martyrs. The *Times*, in reviewing the new proposals, informs us that "too large a proportion of the new revenue under Mr. Lloyd George's administration goes to increasing the official class and making work for the lawyers instead of employment for the poor." The honourable gentleman's idea of social reform is the creation of more and still more officials, for they will be extremely useful to him in his work of regimentation when the Servile State is a going concern. As to making employment for the poor, that is pure nonsense. The removal of chronic overwork from the mass of the people, and the adjustment of the hours of labour, would be a common-sense starting-point. Only such a scheme is not likely to see daylight in the House of Commons—for it can only be born of revolution. Thus the conjuring of the Chancellor and the bleating of the Labour Party are likely to continue for some little time longer. But we still see a vision of other things.

The Report just issued of the Children's Care Committee of the London County Council gives further proof of the criminality that allows officials to control the feeding of the necessitous school children. Although poverty is certainly not abating in London, yet fewer children continue to receive the free meals. The officials of the Charity Organisation Society are manipulating the whole of the machinery, with the result that although during the year the sum spent was £7,795 less for food and service than was estimated, yet there was an increase of £12,000 in the cost of administration.

So the starvation of the children goes steadily on, whilst the mothers labour in many cases for less than 2d. an hour, and some 22,000 policemen in the London area endeavour to keep its inhabitants "within the law." And what a ghastly failure they have proved! Society manufactures the criminals, makes the human derelicts, who, finding that life has been too harsh in their struggle for existence, retaliate by endeavouring to appropriate somebody else's property. Then society proceeds to crush vindictively these poor victims of its insane cruelty, and all the prisoners' aid societies on earth cannot remould those caught by the vengeance of the law. Human justice may be a beautiful term, but, like all things else born of present-day society, it serves merely to hide a hideous lie. How long shall we continue to tolerate the shame and disgrace of it all!

M. B. HOPE.

## PROPAGANDA NOTES.

Manchester.—Any comrade willing to give me a helping hand in distributing Anarchist literature in Manchester, is kindly invited to Stevenson Square on Sundays, 3—5.30 p.m., and occasionally from 7.30 to 10 p.m. also. It is nearly time a few more took a hand at selling *FREEDOM*, *Voice of Labour*, and pamphlets. Good propaganda work can be done in Manchester so long as all the work is not left to one man. Long live Anarchy!

O. K.

Chopwell Group will hold open-air meetings on Sundays as follows:—

June 7, Rowlands Gill, 6.30 p.m.  
June 14, Prudhoe-on-Tyne, 6.30 p.m.  
June 28, High Spenn, 11.30 a.m.  
July 5, Crawcrook, 11 a.m.

International Modern School.—We hope shortly to bring out our next number of the *Modern School*, wherein you will find exhaustive reports, articles, and letters from the nippers. Our last was well received, and our copies are sold out.

Sundays, 3.30 p.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7.30.

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JIMMY DICK.

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(April 30—June 4.)

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