

# Freedom

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## NOTES.

### The Triumph of Starvation.

The relentless pressure of starvation is steadily forcing the miners out of their trenches, and in spite of their overwhelming vote against accepting the proposals of the Government for district settlements and a national appeal tribunal, it is almost certain they will have to go back on the mineowners' terms. When the Government was forced in August of last year to grant a subsidy to the coal industry in order to stave off the threatened mass attack of the Trade Union, they determined, in conjunction with Big Business, that if such another challenge to their power were ever thrown down by organised Labour it would be accepted and fought to the bitter end. Every preparation was made for a struggle, and when the General Strike took place last May the challenge was gladly accepted by the more aggressive members of the Government, who decided that, whatever the cost might be, the Miners' Federation must be beaten, for they reckoned that if they could break the power of the strongest Trade Union in the country not another one would dare to stand up against them for many a day. This policy is now being carried out with the support of the pooled resources of Privilege and Monopoly, and all the gentle dames and well-fed gentlemen who constitute the ruling class are watching starvation stalking through the mining districts, working deadly havoc among the women and children, just as calmly and callously as they watched the progress of starvation in the ranks of their other enemies during the War. They know that the relief funds are pitifully inadequate to provide food for the enormous number of men, women, and children involved in this grim struggle with starvation, and their press shouts with glee when a few miners sullenly return to work because they can no longer bear to hear their children cry for bread. Never has the sheer brutality of our social system been shown so naked and unashamed as in this long-drawn-out tragedy, and the only compensation we can find is a hope that out of this struggle will grow an irresistible determination to put an end to the system that makes such things possible.

### Religion and Science.

The conflict between religion and science is a never-ending one, but no one expects the Church to acknowledge its defeats. The holy fathers are very prompt to see when their material interests are endangered, and as soon as they are driven out of one position they take up another. When Darwin first launched his theory of evolution, the Church hit out at him with all the force at its command. But as he and others poured out the incontrovertible facts on which the theory was based, most thinking people began to accept it. Finding the current too strong for it to swim against, the Church altered its attitude and tried to harmonise the Biblical story of Creation with evolution. It was a ghastly failure, but it saved the situation for the time being. Recently the Church has plucked up its courage again, and is trying to discredit the victories of science by a method made familiar to us during the War. When the Allied armies were attacked and driven back a considerable distance, the *communiqué* told us it was a great victory, as the enemy had not reached his "objective"; but the casualty lists and the extent of the retreat showed how severe a defeat it had been for the Allied forces. The Church says now that as science had claimed it could explain the origin of the universe and has not done so, it has been defeated. Science, of course, never made such a ridiculous claim; but the extent of its victories can be gauged by the writings of some of the leaders of the Church, who have thrown overboard such myths as the virgin birth of Christ, the resurrection, the story of Creation, and even hell; and their recent Congress devoted itself almost entirely to talking about the "Eternal Spirit," whatever that may be. Yes, the casualty lists of religion are very heavy, and others will follow later on.

### Ploughing the Sands at Westminster.

Anarchists have always pointed out the uselessness of Parliament as a means of bringing about any serious social or economic changes, but "rebels" who go there can usually find some justification for their presence. George Lansbury is one of these people, but we doubt whether even he can find a sufficiently reasonable excuse for staying in the House of Commons after his exposure of its futility in his *Labour Weekly* of October 2. We will let him speak for himself:—

"The House of Commons is dominated and controlled by a few men on either side of the House. The bulk of members are not expected to take an active and intelligent interest in the business. 'Theirs not to reason why, theirs but to vote and dine,' is all that is expected of them. Now and then awkward people arise who ask inconvenient questions and say nasty things. If necessary such persons are called into the inner circles and become tame and docile with the rest. . . . Nowadays men on all sides, especially the two Front Benches, almost invariably call each other 'right honourable friends.' There is not even the pretence of enmity—it is taken for granted we are working for a common objective. There is nothing of the class war about our relationships. . . . Just now it [the House of Commons] has become one of the greatest obstacles to working-class progress because of the unreality and make-believe of its procedure. Every great Parliamentary fight is a sham, heralded by all sides as a severe and trying struggle on behalf of some vital principle, yet every one who takes part knows the precise moment it will end, and knows, too, that most who take part do not really believe anything will come from all their talk."

However, Lansbury still believes something good can be got out of Parliament, but first "it must be revolutionised from top to bottom." Whenever anything truly revolutionary happens in Great Britain we feel certain this "talking shop" will disappear.

### The Continental Steel Trust.

The formation of the Continental Steel Trust, composed of the principal steel manufacturers of Germany, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Sarre, is the climax to a tendency in the European steel industry for some years past. The agreement apportions the annual production of the five countries in agreed shares, and the Trust guarantees each country against competition in its home market by the other members. The manufacturers of Great Britain have been invited to join, but for the present remain outside. In the above five countries Free Trade in this vital industry has been abolished by a stroke of the pen and Protection established without their respective Parliaments having a voice in the matter. The principal effect of the Trust is its danger to the workers in the steel industry, who are now faced with a combination of employers that can dictate terms to their Trade Unions. If this gigantic Trust is successful as an economic proposition, its example will be followed by other industries. Its political effect will be to relieve our garrulous Parliaments of the interminable debates on Free Trade and Protection, and decide questions hitherto regarded as the prerogative of representative assemblies. As an example of this tendency at home we may mention the gas mantle industry. Under the Safeguarding of Industries Act the Government imposed a duty of 33 1-3 per cent. on imported mantles. But the English manufacturers wanted a monopoly, and as this duty did not entirely prevent "alien" mantles coming in they have agreed to pay German exporters 4s. per gross on last year's exportations to suspend their sales to Great Britain for five years. Our patriotic manufacturers can now charge what they please, and the Treasury is diddled out of the £200,000 which the import duties were estimated to produce. What a nasty trick to play on our unsuspecting legislators!

## A Review of the Last Forty Years.

So, here we are at last; all praying to the God of Jobs. "Give me work," cries the soldier to the State, "and I will kill whomever you wish." "Give us a chance to live by talking," shout in chorus the hirelings of the Press, the platform, and the pulpit, "and we will preach you any creed you like." To this imperious necessity of getting a job even the scientist, pledged to the destruction of illusions, is compelled to bend the knee. As to the multitudinous army of wage-earners, its members must scramble for whatever jobs are going, as jackals fight for offal. In a society based on Monopoly there is no other choice. Such a society has lost all sense of individual independence, and has even fallen to the depth of being proud of it. "In our advanced civilisation," say the modern pundits, "we are all interdependent, and our highly-subdivided industrial and political system is one of mutual aid." As to which consult Burke's "Peerage" and the present figures of the unemployed.

The Editor invites me to write on the "Last forty years of Socialism, Anarchism, and the Labour Movement," and I begin with the conclusion that sums them up. I say that the position described in the preceding paragraph is the position we have reached, and that there is no denying it. I say that when men, individually and in the mass are compelled to sell their souls as the price of keeping themselves alive, you have a civilisation rotten to the core; to which I add that the Socialist, the Anarchist, and the whole Labour movement originally stood pledged to overthrow dependence on the exploiter. Does anyone maintain that the Socialist and Trade Union movements are undermining this slavish system? I answer that they are but-tressing it up at every point, and find to-day the exact expression of their faith in Mr. Sidney Webb's dictum that we must rid ourselves of the delusion of individual independence.

Kirkup's "History of Socialism" is regarded as reliable, and in his chapter on "Anarchism and Syndicalism"—to neither of which he, one of the founders of the Fabian Society, is at all inclined—I find him writing:—

"But there is an element of valuable criticism in the Syndicalist idea. The old conception of Socialism as the ownership and control of the means of production, the consumers organised as a democratic State, leads in a modern industrial community direct to centralised bureaucracy. Such an idea is to the vast majority altogether distasteful. It would mean that, as a group of half a dozen men in the Cabinet now have virtual power to come to all decisions (within limits) affecting government; as the Postmaster-General, in the last resort, can ruin the life of every postman in the land; so under this conception of Socialism, however democratic the Government might be, a very few men would necessarily be entrusted with the control of the lives of every citizen, and from this control there would be virtually no escape."

But what does "within limits" mean?

Read through the paragraph again, and ask yourselves whether all this concentration of industrial power in the hands of the State would not have exactly the effect described; whether the postman and the railwayman, the miner and the agriculturist, would not be completely at the mercy of the State authorities from whom they got their jobs. How could it be otherwise? As things are, the masses are compelled to work for masters, but there are many of such masters, and the wage-slave can play off one against the other, and strike for better terms. Under State ownership there is only one master, and to strike is treason, punishable it may be with death, as in our own military services and in Russia.

What astounds me is Kirkup's implied suggestion that Socialism has changed; that it has abandoned or modified its mother-idea of the State as the sole employer. It has done nothing of the kind. On the contrary, everywhere the entire Socialist and Communist movement presses on toward the goal on which, despite constant internal bickerings, its soul is set. That goal is the strengthening of the coercive State, at the expense of the economic and political independence of the workers; the enlargement of its functions; the multiplication of

office-holders who live by governing their subjects, the dependent masses. In this it has the support of all the politicians, who naturally favour whatever expands their sphere of influence. Can Mr. Kirkup, or any Socialist, point to a single important department in which during the last forty years State activities have been curtailed? Armies and navies have been increased incalculably; and they exist to overawe the rebel and prove to him that disobedience of the State's autocratic mandates is punishable with death. Spies, detectives, agents-provocateur, and policemen swarm, every one of them maintained at the expense of the producer, for the enforcement of the same lesson. All the coercive apparatus by which the disinherited are cowed into submission has been amplified and tightened up; and every step in that enslaving process has been taken with the connivance and active co-operation of a movement that poses before the world as struggling for the emancipation of the exploited masses. Russia is the land in which this enslaving philosophy has come to sudden fruition; but Russia has only put boldly into practice what the "safety first" Fabians and the backstairs politicians of our own Socialist movement are working for steadily, though they find it convenient to swear unflinching loyalty to Constitutionalism and postpone to an indefinite future the realisation of the few vital proposals in their paper programmes.

A reader of FREEDOM challenges me to prove my recent statement that throughout Europe Socialism has shown itself a failure. Can he point to a single country in which it is to-day an actual, or even a probably potential, power? In Russia it is prostrate beneath the heel of a Dictatorship whose one object is to consolidate its rule by alliances with other Governments; for hawks do not pick out the eyes of other hawks, and as against those who seek to minimise the power of rulers all Governments are tacitly combined. In Italy the representatives of the Socialist movement are little more than dummies in the ante-chamber of Mussolini, himself formerly a prominent leader of the party, but an exceptional leader, inasmuch as he had the courage to push its all-government theories to their logical conclusion. In Spain Socialism is a mere shadow. In Switzerland, according to Bertoni, of *Le Reveil*, an excellent judge, the Swiss worker's power to resist was never lower than it is at present; and Switzerland, like the United States, is no longer an asylum for the oppressed of other nations. In France the Socialists are little more than weathercocks indicating the shifting policies of a triumphant bourgeoisie which knows it has the backing of a peasantry impregnated with the conviction that the less it is governed the better. In Sweden the party threatened at one time to become a Parliamentary force, for in 1911 it elected 64 Members to the Lower and 13 to the Upper House—a sudden jump resulting probably from the General Strike of 1909—but it cannot be claimed that Socialism is to-day a dominating influence in any of the Scandinavian countries. And Germany and Austria? In each the Socialists have been in power since the War, and when I scan the statistics of the unemployed, and note the march of Big Business over the prostrate corpses of the small industrialists and traders, I can only conclude that Socialist legislation has not tended toward the emancipation of the masses. Yet, if numbers were a true test of strength, the movement should have been an actual force, for in Germany no less than 4,250,329 votes were cast for the Social-Democratic Party in the 1912 election.

As for the United States, for half a century at least it has been the scene of incessant Socialist and semi-Socialist experiments, political and otherwise, some few of which have had their moment of apparent triumph, after which they have passed into oblivion. It is, however, essentially the country that has indulged most profligately in that passion for passing laws which has been always one of Socialism's marked features; and nowhere, as I believe, is the law held in such light regard or so habitually violated. Strikes there are little less than civil wars, and in no other so-called civilised country is there so great a readiness to resort to violence for the settlement of industrial disputes. "Verboten" is there far more the watchword than ever it was in Germany before the War, and the authorities are apparently still under the delusion that discontent can be crushed out of existence by the iron heel. In the single month of January, 1920, more than three thousand citizens and aliens

were arrested in the raids set on foot by A. Mitchell Palmer, who was then Attorney-General, and the "Report upon the Illegal Practices of the United States Department of Justice," issued by twelve distinguished lawyers in May, 1920, had this to say about it:—"Wholesale arrests both of aliens and citizens have been made without warrant or any process of law; men and women have been jailed and held incommunicado without access of friends or counsel; homes have been entered without search-warrant and property seized and removed; other property has been wantonly destroyed; working men and working women suspected of radical views have been shamefully abused and mistreated." If there be any truth in the adage that "though the mills of the gods grind slowly they grind exceeding small," the United States has stormy times ahead of it, and probably nowhere will the class struggle be fought out with such ferocity.

As for England, we have had recently a General Strike, which came to an abrupt conclusion, and no informed person supposes for a minute that either the Socialist or Trade Union leaders were in favour of it. At this writing the coal struggle is in its twenty-third week, but it is no calumny to say that such support as it is receiving from the Socialists is due to their necessity of standing well with the Unions, on whom they are dependent for both votes and funds. Nevertheless, the influence of Socialism on our political life during recent years has been enormous, for it has done all it could do to develop the State as a paternal philanthropist of the mediæval type. Paternalism, however, is merely an astute method of keeping the masses in subjection, and philanthropists are usually persons who build almshouses after they have made the poor with whom to fill them. Under the pressure of necessity, and because it fears above all else that some day the starving may take the bit between their teeth and do enormous damage, our ruling class has transformed the State into an immense philanthropic institution which graciously insures the worker against all sorts of ills. Naturally he, as the producer of the revenue the State expends on these philanthropists, must pay for them; but that grim fact Conservatives and Liberals, Socialists and Trade Union leaders all carefully conceal from him. He is wheedled into believing that the rich man foots the bill, although it is obvious that whatever wealth the rich man has was first created by the brain and hand of Labour, the rich merely going through the pockets of the poor and handing back to the State a portion of the swag, to be distributed as "Dole." As an opiate this cannot be beaten, and I say, from personal observation and from the reported experiences of those who have put it to a thorough test, that the ordinary dole-receiver hasn't a revolutionary kick left in him. To me the part played by the Socialists and Labour leaders in the administration of this soothing-syrup is most regrettable, and I think similarly of their repeated voting of special protective tariff privileges to moneyed syndicates, and of large sums for public improvements, the chief effect of which is an enormous enhancement of the value of real estate to the enrichment of the land monopolist. All this, however, defended as providing work for the unemployed, is directly in line with the traditional paternal policies of the Tory party, and Herbert Spencer said truly that Socialism is but the old Toryism in modern dress.

Meanwhile what have the Anarchists been doing? What could or can they do except try to bring the masses down from the clouds of illusion to the realities of actual life? They have to simplify a problem that has been purposely confused; to show that men who have access to the means of supporting themselves can do so easily, and need not be dependent on the bounty of either the State or private employers; to explain that so long as human beings remain shut out from the land, they are necessarily helpless, since it is the source of all wealth; and that, just as my dog has to obey because he is dependent on me for food and shelter, so they will continue at the mercy of the job-giver so long as they are excluded, individually and as a class, from the means of themselves supporting their own lives. These are fundamental truths, and until they are recognised and acted on neither political nor economic freedom can be attained.

In order to live we are compelled, by Nature's law, to work, and work can be conducted in only one of two ways—either by mutual agreement as between men economically free, or by

orders issued from the master above to the dependent slave below. We stand for the former of these two methods as being more productive, less provocative of disorder, and in every way better for all concerned; but it will remain an empty dream until the masses, shaking Monopoly out of the saddle and ridding themselves of the parasites now bleeding them to death, secure equality of opportunity for all. That equality we shall never get from the State, for the State is a despot and the Arch-Monopolist of Power, around whom all the smaller private monopolists cluster for protection. It was cradled in coercion, and begotten by a military barbarism which knew no creed but violence. Its sun is unquestionably setting, because the misery into which it is plunging us is becoming unbearable; but it is not going to be laid quietly to rest. It will fight to its last breath, and our part is to shorten its death-agony instead of prolonging it, as those who still think only in terms of wage-slavery are doing.

In my view, the last forty years have witnessed little more than the development of a great body of discontent, and my hope is that within less than another forty years we shall reap a substantial harvest from that sowing. But for that we must abandon the all too popular amusement of chasing shadows. We must get our heads out of the clouds and centre our attention on the facts beneath our feet, recognising that the present confusion is our intellectual opportunity, and that a small, clear-thinking minority can revolutionise an epoch. This the Socialists will never do, for they are simply trying to adapt themselves to a system based on Monopoly. We, on the other hand, are trying to destroy it.

WM. C. OWEN.

## A Short History of the British Workers.\*

Mr. Postgate has crammed a great deal into this little book of 113 pages, which should whet the appetite of its readers and lead them to further study. He takes us from 1760 down to the General Strike of May last, consequently in the space at his disposal there is not much room for detail; but he has covered the ground very well, and a worker who has never studied the history of the Labour Movement will find it a good introduction. The Owenite movement, the Chartist movement, and the growth of the New Unionism since the great Dock Strike in 1889 are all passed in rapid review.

In dealing with the enclosures of the commons which took place chiefly in the fifty years between 1770 and 1820, he attributes them almost entirely to the fact that the aristocracy were nearly bankrupt owing to their extravagant living, and had to find new sources of income. We think, however, that most of these enclosures were made with the deliberate intention of forcing the landless labourers into the factories which were then beginning to spring up like mushrooms owing to the invention of machinery. The callous exploitation of the workers, including very young children, in those days, and the brutality with which the authorities tried to crush the young Trade Union movement, are only just touched upon; but we hope the students of the Labour Colleges for whom this book was written will read up the history of those terrible times and learn how savage the "gentlemen" of England can be in their lust for riches. Then, perhaps, they will realise how foolish it is for the workers to expect considerate treatment from their exploiters to-day when foreign competition threatens to reduce profits to the vanishing point.

When a new edition of this book is printed we would advise Mr. Postgate to add to the Bibliography "Six Centuries of Work and Wages," by James E. Thorold Rogers, who contends that for two and a half centuries "a conspiracy, concocted by the law and carried out by parties interested in its success, was entered into, to cheat the English worker of his wages, to tie him to the soil, to deprive him of hope, and to degrade him into irremediable poverty." Except that to-day they seek to tie the worker to the factory, the same conspiracy is still at work.

\* "A Short History of the British Workers." By Raymond W. Postgate. 1s. 6d. London: The Plebs League, 162A Buckingham Palace Road, S.W. 1.

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## Co-operating with Capitalism.

In the early days of the Socialist movement the propaganda was devoted entirely to advocating the abolition of Landlordism and Capitalism, the source of the poverty and degradation of the workers. In those days Socialist speakers told their audiences that all our institutions—Parliament, the Church, the Law, and local administrative bodies—were capitalist institutions, regulated by laws passed by a Parliament dominated by the exploiting class; and that when the Social Revolution took place all these institutions would have to be rooted out, and free institutions, worked out by a free people, put in their place. If it was ever suggested that men should be sent to Parliament it was solely with the idea of using the House of Commons as a platform from which to reach a larger audience. And those early Socialist propagandists always emphasised that the basis of the new society must be equality. Their speeches differed very little from those made by Anarchists.

Nearly half a century has passed since these basic principles of the Social Revolution were first preached in this country, but to-day they are hardly ever mentioned in polite Socialist and Labour circles. Utopian, unscientific, primitive—such are the terms used by those who wish to show their contempt for these early teachings, and especially by those who have blossomed out as statesmen or leaders. To-day the Socialist and Labour movement has become eminently respectable. It ranks are full of ex-Cabinet Ministers, Privy Councillors, Members of Parliament, Justices of the Peace, County Councillors, Borough Councillors, Guardians of the Poor, and the small fry of local elective bodies. Besides these there are hundreds and thousands of Labour Party and Trade Union officials scheming to follow in their footsteps and become part of the governing machine. When Winston Churchill said some years ago that Labour was unfit to govern, a chorus of indignation went up from the Labour movement, and the Labour Government of 1924 was supposed to have given the lie to Churchill.

What we want to know—and the workers should also know—is this: are we expected to believe that all these Ministers and M.P.s and Councillors are supposed to be undermining Capitalism, or are they not rather helping to prolong its existence? Does any person really think that those individuals who have been Cabinet Ministers and are still members of His Majesty's Privy Council are working for the abolition of privilege and the substitution of equality? Are they not, in virtue of their office, pledged to maintain capitalist institutions and to safeguard the privileges of the dominant class? And when they were strutting about in Court dress, with cocked hat and sword, was it supposed to signify that the Socialist movement stood for equality in social relations?

In municipal life it is the same. Institutions founded by capitalist Parliaments to carry on capitalist functions are now being managed by Labour men and women, who delude themselves and those who elect them that in some mysterious way they are helping the workers in their fight for freedom. Boards of Guardians have been very much in the public eye of recent years. Quite a number have been "captured by Labour." Has the result been harmful to the present system? The Poor Law was designed to prevent the revolt of starving people, and in straining its regulations in order to help the swarms of unemployed the Labour members have but softened down the cruelties of the capitalist system. Some of them overstepped the limits, as at West Ham, and were promptly suspended. But none of them touched the root causes of unemployment.

Labour men and women even take a hand in the administration of the criminal laws passed for the protection of the exploiting class. We have not been able to find out how many Labour people sit as magistrates, but in any list of Labour M.P.s and Trade Union officials

we can always be sure of finding the letters J.P. after some of their names. In one Union in Lancashire out of sixteen district secretaries seven are J.P.s. When these men sit on the bench, are they working for the overthrow of capitalist exploitation? Were they made J.P.s for that purpose?

In 1905 Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman made John Burns President of the Local Government Board, with a seat in the Cabinet and a salary of £2,000 a year. By this means he not only bought over a man whose influence with the workers might be dangerous to the powers that be, but he also inspired hopes of similar favours in the breasts of other "careerists" in the Labour movement, hopes which in a number of cases have since been realised. No doubt some simple Labour men think they may be able to help the workers by taking office in capitalist institutions, but they only help to disguise the real class character of them. Their employers are quite cynical about the business. "We clip their ears and dock their tails and tell them they are terriers."

There are many other ways in which ambitious Labour men are seduced into co-operating with Capitalism. The League of Nations, the International Labour Office, the Industrial Welfare League, and other reform organisations of a similar character have as members many Labour men and women, who work on committees, and often dine, with exploiters of labour, and become impregnated with the capitalist point of view. The Industrial Christian Fellowship has some tame Labour leaders on its books; they talk about Christian ethics and helping the "poor poor," but it is bad form to talk about abolishing the system which makes the poor poor.

We could give many more instances of this co-operation between Labour and exploiters of labour, if necessary. But, summed up, it all comes to this, that the revolutionary spirit which inspired the Socialist and Labour movement in its early days has now been displaced by a spirit of compromise and co-operation with Capitalism. The movement has now become a political power and a vast business organisation, but in proportion as it has grown in political strength it has weakened in revolutionary strength. In the course of time the Labour Party will again form a Government, but by then it will have so adapted itself to its new environment that its original aim of abolishing the exploitation of man by man will have been forgotten in the enjoyment of the sweets of office.

This evolution could have been foreseen by anyone who studied the history of political parties. FREEDOM from its first number pointed out the inevitable result of Parliamentary action, but its voice was drowned by the cheers of hollow electoral victories. Will experience teach the workers even now, or will they repeat the old fatal mistakes from generation to generation, world without end?

## "FREEDOM'S" BIRTHDAY FUND.

The response to our appeal for £100 has not been quite as good as we had hoped, for our financial position is really very bad, if not dangerous; but we are optimistic enough to think that when our readers have seen the splendid tributes in this issue to FREEDOM's work for Anarchism in the past forty years, they will send us the means of carrying on that work. Wherever possible comrades should make collections among friends and sympathisers, who may be able to contribute sums which they think too small to send separately.

The following donations have been received to date (October 5): F. A. Blossom 4s. 4d., Theo. L. Miles and Sam Cohen (San Francisco) £3 1s. 7d., R. W. Evans 5s., C. Blandy 2s. 6d., G. P. 2s. 6d., A. B. Howie 2s., E. Richmond £1, L. Newman 10s., S. Llewellyn 2s. 6d., E. R. £1, A. D. Moore 10s., H. G. Russell 5s., Emma Goldman £1, A. J. R. 10s., T. H. K. 10s., L. G. Wolfe £1, R. Gundersen 13s. 4d.

## Anarchist Youth International.

This International, which was founded at Soest, Holland, last Whitsun, asks comrades, organisations, groups, and all who can subscribe to the principal points of the International to send their addresses to M. Stevens, Shackletonstr. 16 I., Amsterdam (West), Holland. *Platform of Action*—(1) The organisation of a press service for the youth; (2) the organisation of assistance for political prisoners (such as the exchange of war resisters); (3) the organisation of international youth meetings. Among those already affiliated are the Anarchist Youth of France, Belgium, and Holland, the Union of War Resisters of France, and the Anarchist Syndicalist Youth of Germany.

## “Freedom’s” Fortieth Birthday.

So FREEDOM’s fortieth birthday has come and the forty years since 1886, wearisome and tedious in so many other respects, merge almost into a short spell of real and full happiness when I concentrate my thought on dear old FREEDOM. Nearly month by month the friendly co-operation of excellent comrades, many of whom are gone, some still with us, produced for the reader a few moments of mental and sentimental life in the free Anarchist world of our hopes, dreams, and certain expectations, an infinitely pleasant sensation which few other factors can produce. FREEDOM was always kind and gentle, faithful and hopeful, fair and reasoning, tasteful and well-proportioned. It excels by such qualities above ever so many Anarchist periodical and other publications which, however well-intentioned, are mostly less harmonious and less productive of the intellectual and sentimental comfort described. They possess other qualities, the personal note of interesting men, the elated feelings of stirring times, or they are the mouthpiece of vigorous organisations with all that is inseparable from organised life, predominating creeds, uncharitable criticism of dissenters, and personal matters. All this may create a stronger impression for the moment, but it passes away, and though the historian may look it up in later years, very few others like to revive these nervous memories of struggles and hard blows given and taken. But to FREEDOM one turns back with pleasure. I have several times run over large parts of its early issues and always felt the best of the past restored to me for a moment, and the fine Anarchist feeling pervading every page kept its freshness. The right thing was said then as it is said now, because the basis of all was unswerving faith in freedom, fairness in reasoning, and gentleness in feeling.

Most likely these rare qualities keep the paper as small as when it was created and exactly as poor as it was in 1886, if not more so. It was conducted by comrades who felt greater sympathy and solidarity with the masses than most men of their time, but they never stepped one inch out of their way to win the applause of these masses by the means generally used, from the lowest advertiser of quack pills to the loftiest politician, and—I say this with regret—to the average Labour leader and Socialist. FREEDOM does not claim to be infallible, but for forty years month by month it pointed out to the masses the true remedy which lies within themselves, which their own will and effort can set in motion every day, and which nothing can replace. When such advice remains unheeded, the old disorder continues, exploitation prospers, the sufferings of unemployment become chronic; only the political and even the pretending Socialist slogans by which the people are befooled vary from time to time—a very meagre result, which leaves things as they were.

These forty years, indeed, witnessed the failure of the State Socialist effort, against which every line of FREEDOM warned and its warning. These fallacies are still in vogue, but Anarchists need not despair; their time will come. The rooted belief in authority inevitably infected also the greater part of the Socialist propaganda and led to the construction of all those Spanish castles which tumble down into nothingness as times become harder. Socialists in elective bodies, in municipal and governmental offices, and as Ministers; governmental Labour parties, alleged Soviet rule and dictatorship of the leaders of a Communist party, leading to the uncontrolled domination of an immense Empire like Russia—all this and Trade Unionist organisation brought to perfection was produced during these forty years, and all proved a bitter disappointment, a dismal failure, and can be characterised by the French proverb: the more things change the more they remain the same. Not one of these achievements with their superficial triumphs relied upon the people or strove to make them act for themselves in freedom and solidarity; everything tended to erect above the masses a new parasitic superstructure, filled with new autocrats and bureaucrats, painted red this time and labelled “Labour” or “Socialist” or “Communist.” Thus State Socialism displayed itself before our eyes these forty years; and whilst it was and is a dismal spectacle, yet we may trust that it is played out by this display and will scarcely take more tangible form in the future. Authoritarian Socialism, looking ahead of Capitalism in Socialist matters, was still tied to the State by the authoritarian misconception, and thus it never really separated itself from the present system. It scorned a real fundamental change, a social revolution destructive of State power as well as of capitalistic

monopoly; hence inevitably it became part and parcel of the system, and will collapse and vanish with it. Between Anarchism and the State it clung to the State and will disappear with the State. It is a movement numerically strong, as backward movements usually are, but intellectually and morally on the wane. It understood so little how to give any benefit, satisfaction, and comfort to mankind that in running away from it stupid people madly create and foment Fascist movements, the lowest depth of human degradation reached up till now.

I hope, then, that Capitalism, State Socialism, Bolshevism, and Fascism, hideous outgrowths of the promiscuity of monopoly, authority, fanaticism, and ignorance, will reach their acme and decline and fall together. They cannot live separately; they mutually produce each other. When they are gone there will be room for free co-operation and mutual goodwill, freedom and happiness for all; then it will be seen that the Anarchist effort was not made in vain, and that the future belongs to its gradual realisation. I say “gradual,” because after all these ages of ignorance and brutality a general realisation can only be expected at the end, not at the beginning, of a progressive period. Still, then the current will be with freedom, and improvement may be rapid.

When FREEDOM began it could not be foreseen what an enormous quantity of Socialist development would be crowded into those forty years. Neither the great expansion of superficial Socialist parties, nor their internal corruption and virtual impotence, were then considered near at hand; but the voice of FREEDOM warned from the beginning, and its previsions were verified to a larger and more detrimental extent than anyone could have expected in the '80s. Also, the growth of domineering tendencies, intolerance, and dictatorship was foretold; but no human brain could have anticipated the horrors of Russian fratricidal cruelty as practised by the profiteers of a century’s manifold revolutionary action, the Bolsheviks, who by military force reaped all the benefits of the Russian Revolution for themselves, just as Bonaparte was the profiteer of the French Revolution, monopolising dictatorships in both instances. Again, whilst always exposing the Parliamentary illusions of State Socialists, FREEDOM could not foresee to what depths Socialist officialism and governmentalism would sink in many countries during these forty years.

Anarchism in England—unknown in the '70s, when all the links connecting some men in earlier years with the ideas of Josiah Warren, the American Individualist Anarchist, had been broken—rose from three main sources in the first half of the '80s. The first Socialist propagandists—the men of the open-air meetings, the leaflet propaganda, and the lectures all over “Red London” (the Radical clubs, etc.)—came in contact in the International Club, at the Revolutionary Congress of July, 1881, and elsewhere, with some early Socialists, Chartists, and O’Brienites, still sturdy men then; with French refugees of the Commune, German refugees, the comrades of Most and Neve, of the *Freiheit*, and with Malatesta and other Italians. Whilst most of them remained Social Democrats or Revolutionary Socialists, a few looked further ahead and arrived at Anarchism by the natural process of logical thinking. Wishing to obtain the complete realisation of Socialism, they saw the inevitability of the Social Revolution, the need for solidarity and federation, the struggle against Authority in all its forms, and the fallacy of Parliamentary methods and State Socialism, and they became virtual Anarchists, whether they used this word or not. Joseph Lane explained these ideas in his “Anti-Statist, Collectivist, and Revolutionary Manifesto” of 1887, the first English Anarchist pamphlet. Sam Mainwaring was another of these early Anarchists whose ideas later on attracted some of the provincial comrades, the most active of whom in those years was Fred Charles, then in Norwich. The ideas of these men were no doubt less elaborated theoretically than those of the Continental Anarchists of the *Révolté* group, but they were thoroughgoing popular revolutionists and less separated from realities than some of the keener theorists.

A second impulse was given by Benjamin R. Tucker’s *Liberty* (Boston), first published in 1881. This paper necessarily created the impression with English readers that only Individualist Anarchism was real Anarchism. In those days Tucker’s paper expressed sympathy with the Russian revolutionary struggle, then at its height (the killing of Alexander III in 1881), and Tucker had the excellent idea to translate Bakunin’s “God and the State” (Boston, 1883). Henry Seymour issued copies of this with a local title (Tunbridge Wells, 1883), and the pamphlet was widely circulated and made

many readers see more clearly, eliminating the God and State illusions which early surroundings and education create in most of us. But the other American literature was all Individualist, and in this spirit *The Anarchist*, started in 1885, was mainly written, though the editor, Henry Seymour, also addressed himself to Elisée Reclus, who wrote a fine introductory letter for an early issue.

The third impulse came from thoughtful readers of the *Révolte* who accepted completely Peter Kropotkin's Anarchist Communist ideas as elaborated in that paper mainly since 1880. Mrs. Charlotte M. Wilson was one of these, and the first careful expositions of Communist Anarchism can be found in a few early numbers of *Justice*, the organ of the Social-Democratic Federation, and even in one of the earliest Fabian Tracts (No. 4). The declaration of the Anarchists on trial at Lyons—many French comrades and Peter Kropotkin—in January, 1883, was issued as a leaflet by the international groups. This trial attracted general attention, as Kropotkin was well known then in England for his personal qualities and his scientific work, and also for his agitation for Russian freedom by many lectures (1881-82) and in the *Newcastle Chronicle* and the monthly reviews. This led to many inquiries about Anarchism, and Elisée Reclus wrote "Anarchism by an Anarchist" for the *Contemporary Review* (1885), the first of these fine magazine articles, of which Kropotkin wrote so many for the *Nineteenth Century*.

When Kropotkin settled in England in the early months of 1886, after three years of French prison, Mrs. C. M. Wilson and other English Communist Anarchists began to work with him, and the group was formed which in the autumn of that year founded *FREEDOM* and was henceforth known as the Freedom Group. At first Henry Seymour offered them the use of the *Anarchist* as their propagandist paper, and this offer was accepted and operated for a few months. But no real harmony ever existed, and this induced the group to publish a paper devoted entirely to Communist Anarchist ideas, namely *FREEDOM* (October, 1886).

In 1886 the Socialist League—founded December, 1884—still contained William Morris, Edward Carpenter, and many members under the spell of that free and beautiful Socialism which these men so well understood how to expound amidst every-day ugly life. There were also revolutionary Socialists, of whom Frank Kitz was a characteristic type; Anarchists like Joseph Lane and Sam Mainwaring; the few English Marxists, the Avelings, Belfort Bax, and others; some Trade Unionists, like Binning; and still more moderate Socialist reformers—all propagating their ideas within the League. For all of them had been in the Social Democratic Federation, and before that in the same organisation when called the Democratic Federation, comprising all the advanced elements of these years, the Land Nationalisers and Christian Socialists excepted, who had separate organisations. They were united for a common protest, voiced in the address "To Socialists" (December, 1884), against the ideas, tactics, and various personal traits of H. M. Hyndman and his followers, and founded the Socialist League and the *Commonweal*. But each section kept their own opinions, and very soon three main currents appeared: that of Morris and his friends, that of the revolutionary Socialists and Anarchists, and that of the Marxists and reformists. The first two currents prevailed, and in the spring of 1887 the Marxists left.

Most of this Kropotkin must have known in 1886, for he had passed many months of 1881 and 1882 in England, and somehow it came about that he was very well acquainted with Hyndman but never really made friends with William Morris. Perhaps Hyndman's dabbling in foreign politics drew them together, whilst the artistic interests of Morris may have made him look small in the eyes of Kropotkin, who in those years was a greater revolutionary rigorist than he at least appeared to be in later years; he did not change, but he was less passionate. These circumstances, and no doubt the presence of the Marxists in the League, probably explain why the Freedom Group did not care to enter into relations with the Socialist League, a fact inevitable perhaps, but regrettable, for in 1886 and 1887 the League contained the very best Socialist elements of the time, men who had deliberately rejected Parliamentarism and reformism, and who worked for the splendid free Communism of William Morris or for broadminded revolutionary Anarchism. If Kropotkin's experience and ardour had helped this movement, we might say to-day Kropotkin and William Morris, as we say Elisée Reclus and Kropotkin. Unfortunately, we cannot say so. There was a latent lack of sympathy between the Anarchists of the League and those of the Freedom Group in those early years; the latter were believed

by the former to display some sense of superiority, being in possession of definitely elaborated Communist Anarchist theories. They concentrated their energies on theoretical propaganda, whilst the revolutionists of the League endeavoured before all to reach the people and to promote popular action. If both efforts had been co-ordinated, a much stronger movement would have been created.

As it was, both sections kept aloof, and did so even after 1890, when the League had become quite Anarchist, with the exception of William Morris and his comrades at Hammersmith; and groups like the *Commonweal* group now replaced the branches of the League. After the cessation of the *Commonweal* in the summer of 1894, followed by several months' interruption of *FREEDOM* early in 1895, the remnant of the *Commonweal* Group joined the Freedom Group, and *FREEDOM*, restarted in May, 1895, became and has remained the principal English Anarchist organ. These facts explain, perhaps, why the paper always lacked a strong popular basis. Such a basis was not looked for in the beginning, when clear theoretical propaganda was the first aim; and in later years, since 1895, it was too late—the revolutionary elements of the League were dispersed and the people became the prey of the electoral and reformist parties who gather in their votes by the million and otherwise leave things as they are.

*FREEDOM* had the good fortune to have careful, patient, and modest editors, men and women—Mrs. C. M. Wilson and Alfred Marsh are typical of them—who kept the paper on a high level, aiming at being always fair, gentle, and courteous, and striving to introduce beauty and harmony into the exposition of Anarchism. No violent polemics, no personalities, nothing ugly and trivial will be found in the many pages of *FREEDOM*, set up by compositors, mostly comrades, who worked often under the stress of really hard circumstances. Very few papers insisted so much on the beauties of Anarchism, working by fair reasoning, and avoiding all exasperating phraseology. Somehow after all, besides all the help given by Kropotkin to the paper from 1886 to the autumn of 1914, which saw the death of Alfred Marsh and the outbreak of the War, the example of William Morris, his love of a beautiful free Socialism, has left its mark on *FREEDOM* to this very day.

A paper of this long duration—forty years—is worthy of a monograph, a special study of all the ideas proposed in it by so many comrades of many countries, a task worth the while of a young Anarchist. Not only this book but quite a series could be produced by well-selected reprints from *FREEDOM*, which always endeavoured to give the best articles, original or translations, and the most reliable information on revolutionary events. The earlier anniversary articles give the history of the paper, but what stores of recollections passed away with Alfred Marsh in 1914, and have since accumulated in the memory of the present editor. These two conducted the paper safely through periods of deep depression; and Thomas Keell notably understood how to carry it on as an upright Anarchist paper throughout the baleful years of the War and the period of Bolshevik illusions, both of which obscured the judgment of so many.

What with Labourism in and out of office, Moscovian Communism, and—the inevitable result of all the false moves within and without the ranks of Labour—the present economic depression and increasing difficulties of world-wide dimensions, the position of *FREEDOM* is necessarily unique within this large Empire. It stands alone in telling the truth which is unwelcome to ever so many interested parties, to the State and to Capital, as well as—unfortunately—to deluded Labour itself. It will continue to do so, and as an old friend of the paper with which many of my happiest hours were passed, as a reader from the beginning, or as a modest contributor since the '90s, I wish it good luck. Some of us saw its birth, many more assisted at its coming of age, a fine gathering held in October, 1907; may some of us be left to assist at its fiftieth birthday. Let us hope that it will be passed in better conditions than the present state of ruin and crisis seems to offer.

Sept. 3, 1926.

M. NETTLAU.

## GENERAL IDEA OF THE REVOLUTION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

By P.-J. PROUDHON.

Translated from the French by JOHN BEVERLEY ROBINSON.

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## The True Nature of the State.

Some months before the October Revolution of 1917 Lenin wrote his well-known work, "The State and Revolution," which exhibits a singular mixture of Marxist and seemingly Anarchistic philosophy. Therein, by a careful selection of materials, Lenin seeks to make out that Marx and Engels always stood for the abolition of the State, and that they wished to make use of it only during the transition period of the Revolution. At the same time he attacks in the sharpest manner Kautsky, Plechanov, and the so-called "Opportunists" of modern Marxism, and upbraids them for having deliberately falsified Marx's teachings by withholding from the workers the ideas he and Engels held respecting the duration of the Proletarian Dictatorship. Our present task is not to subject to serious criticism Lenin's affirmations, although it would be easy to produce citations from his own works, and from those of Marx and Engels, which prove exactly the opposite of what he says. Commentaries of that character are usually of trifling importance, inasmuch as in the end it is not a question of whether this and that one said or wrote this or that at some time of his life, but of whether his sayings have been confirmed or contradicted by practical experience. Everything else has just as little worth as have our theologians' subtle commentaries on the Revelations of St. John.

In "The State and Revolution" Lenin expressly explains that the difference between the Marxists and the Anarchists lies in the fact "the former have set as their goal the complete abolition of the State, but that this, in their judgment, can be obtained only through a Socialist Revolution which will abolish classes, the adoption of Socialism leading to the death of the State; while the Anarchists want the State abolished entirely between to-day and to-morrow, and have no comprehension of the conditions needed to bring about its abolition."

This explanation in its day caused quite a number of Anarchists to regard Lenin and his party as near comrades. Many indeed went so far as to accept, as being all in the bargain, the famous "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," as it was presumably only for a transition period and could not, in the interest of the Revolution, be evaded. Apparently it was not understood that the great danger lay in the thought that during the transition period the Dictatorship was an unavoidable necessity.

History recognises no transition periods, but simply comparatively primitive and high forms of development. Every new order of society is in its original forms of expression naturally primitive and defective. Nevertheless the scheme of its future development, and all the possibilities inherent in the unfolding that has yet to come, must have been already embodied in its new-shaped institutions, just as the entire animal, or the entire plant, exists already in embryo. Every attempt to incorporate in a new order of things the essential ingredients of an old, broken-down society has resulted hitherto either in the new development being frustrated at the start or in the tender germs of the new being so enmeshed in the rigid forms of the old that their natural unfolding is checked and they gradually die away.

To maintain that the State will be necessary until classes have been abolished requires a very queer sort of logic. As if the State had not been always the creator of new privileged classes, and had not incorporated in the very essence of its being the eternalising of class distinctions! This irrefutable truth, which history has confirmed time and time again, has once more been so established by the Bolshevik experiment in Russia that one must be smitten with incurable blindness if one cannot see the enormous import of this latest teaching.

Under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat there has developed in the Russia of to-day a new ruling class, the Commissar Aristocracy, and this the masses are finding quite as much of an oppressor as were the administrators of the old régime. This new class gets its parasitic living in the same way as did its predecessors. It monopolises the best residences and is well looked after in all respects, while the masses suffer from lack of everything. So this new class has, to an absurd degree, all the tyrannical habits of those formerly in power, and it weighs on the country like a nightmare. A new and most characteristic word has come into the common people's speech—"Soviet-bourgeois." This expression, to-day common in workers' circles, shows clearly and distinctly the people's feeling toward this new ruling caste now governing in its name.

In view of these cruel facts Lenin's declaration that the State must continue to exist until classes have been abolished sounds like a bad joke. No; the reality is quite otherwise. The State's entire machinery of power is merely for the creation of new privileges and the defence of old ones. This is its very essence, the whole substance of its being, whether its character be outspokenly civilian or whether it writes on its shop-sign the words "Dictatorship of the Proletariat." One cannot gather grapes from thistles, and just as little can one transform a weapon for the maintenance of class-ruler-ship and monopoly into a weapon for the freeing of the people.

In his brilliant essay on "The Modern State" Kropotkin makes the following profound remarks:—

"He who demands of any institution representing a historical structure that it shall serve to destroy the privileges it has itself developed shows thereby his incapacity to understand what a historical structure means to the life of a society. He fails to grasp the basic law of all organic development, namely, that new functions call for new organs, and that these must build themselves."

These words embody one of Life's deepest truths, and touch one of the gravest infirmities from which the culture of our times is suffering.

Institutions occupy the same place in a society as do organs in the body of an animal or plant. They are the organs of the social body. Organs do not come into being arbitrarily, but in accordance with the set needs of the environment. The eye of a deep-sea fish is shaped differently from that of a land animal, for it has different duties to perform. Altered life-conditions produce altered organs. But always an organ fulfils only a certain determined function, and when the organism no longer requires the activity of that function the organ gradually dies and becomes rudimentary. Never, however, does an organ undertake a function alien to its essential being.

So it is with social institutions. They also do not come into existence arbitrarily but make their appearance in response to definite social needs and for the attainment of definite ends. It was thus, for example, that the Modern State developed, after the division into classes and the monopolisation of industry had reached an advanced stage. The new possessing classes needed an instrument of power which would maintain their industrial and social privileges as against the working masses. *The Modern State came into existence, and developed, essentially as the organ of the privileged classes for the holding-down and suppression of the masses.*

This is the task that constitutes the essence of its being; the one cause for its existence. To this task the State has always remained true, and must remain true, for it cannot get out of its skin. Its forms have changed in the course of social evolution, but its task has always been the same. In fact, it has continually broadened its activities in proportion as it has subjected to its might new branches of social life. Whether it calls itself a Republic or a Monarchy, whether it is organised on the basis of a Constitution or on that of an Autocracy, its historic mission remains unchanged.

Just as little as a man can alter arbitrarily the functions of an organ in the body of an animal or plant, or see with his ears or hear with his eyes because he wishes to, just so little is it possible to convert an instrument for suppression into one for freeing the oppressed. The State can be only what it is—a defender of privilege and mass-exploitation, the creator of new classes and new monopolies. He who does not recognise this as being the rôle of the State has no grasp of the realities of our social order, and is incapable of showing mankind the new horizons of its evolution.

The Bolsheviks, when they introduced into Russia the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, did not merely take over the State apparatus of the old society. They actually equipped it with such absolute powers as no other Government in the world has yet exhibited. They have handed over to it every department of public life, and, at first, actually committed to it the whole organisation of industry. Ruthlessly they have suppressed all and everything that stood in their way, and, depriving the masses of all right to express their thoughts and feelings, have created the most formidable bureaucracy the world has seen. The celebrated words of the French Jacobin, Saint Just, that it is the lawmaker's task to commandeer private conscience and teach the citizen to think as does the State, have never been put into force on such a scale and so realistically as in Russia under the so-called Dictatorship of the Proletariat, which has always been nothing but a Dictatorship over the Proletariat and the people at large.

In his well-known "Bourgeois Democracy and Proletarian

Dictatorship" Lenin has attempted to justify the suppression of freedom of assembly in Russia by reference to the great revolutions in England and France, where the monarchical elements were not allowed to meet in public and give expression to their views. But this argument is merely a sophistical veiling of the actual facts. In England and France the young Republics were in a life or death struggle with their monarchical adversaries. So long as it was a question of the most elementary self-defence, of to be or not to be, the course of the revolutionists is not merely comprehensible but is also justified morally. When, however, later on, under the Dictatorships of Cromwell and Robespierre, brute force was raised into a system, it operated as has every other tyranny and with corresponding consequences. In Russia, on the other hand, the suppressed were not merely those who had carried on the old régime, but also all those of revolutionary and Socialist tendencies who had helped to overthrow the Autocracy and risked their blood and lives by opposing counter-revolutionary attempts. There comes in the great distinction, and on it Lenin naturally was silent.

When Lenin further declares that the so-called freedom of the press in democratic countries must remain a sham so long as the best printing establishments and the largest stocks of paper are in the hands of the capitalists, he dodges facts. In Soviet Russia conditions for the revolutionary and Socialist press are a thousand times worse than they are in any capitalistic country. In other countries the capitalists have at their disposal the best printing establishments and the largest stocks of paper, as Lenin very truly remarks; but in Russia the State commands all the printing establishments and all the paper, and is consequently in a position to suppress every opinion unpleasant to it. To that point it has come. In capitalist countries the free expression of opinion by word of mouth and in writing is naturally much circumscribed, but in Russia, under the so-called Dictatorship of the Proletariat, it does not exist at all.

What is the outcome of all this? A complete failure on the part of the Dictatorship to pave the way for a new industrial system and practical realisation of Socialism—a hopeless capitulation to that very Capitalism it pretended itself eager to destroy.

R. ROCKER.

## A Tribute and Appreciation.

This issue of FREEDOM marks a magnificent struggle of forty years to hold high the ideal of Anarchism—an achievement which stands unique in the annals of Anarchist publications. Other papers, too, had to struggle, and most of them go on doing so. But to FREEDOM falls the distinction of having held out bravely for forty years without ever turning from its chosen path.

To do justice to the events that have crowded in on FREEDOM during this long period, the ebb and tide of hope and despair, the help and inspiration given to those who laboured and suffered for a new social order, one would have to write a whole book; one can say but little in a short article. Still it is worth while to throw light if only on a few phases in the remarkable life of FREEDOM, to show what love for an ideal, devotion to it, and great fortitude in its struggle can accomplish.

Forty years in the eternity of time play but an insignificant part. But for those who are called upon to wage an incessant battle against a world of opposition, ignorance, stupidity, and cold indifference, forty years themselves are an eternity. Burning faith, great courage, and the capacity for endurance are needed to survive the test of time, the test of a thousand vicissitudes.

True, FREEDOM was most fortunate in the intellectual quality and the moral fibre of its originators and those who watched over its growth and integrity for many years—Kropotkin, Tcherkesoff, Nettlau, Malatesta, Marsh, Turner, Wess, Cantwell, Keell, and many other devoted spirits who made up the personnel of Freedom Group. How well I remember my first contact with these beautiful people on my first visit to England in 1895, and again in 1900 and 1907. How inspiring and strengthening were the harmony of ideas, the unity of purpose, the fine comradeship that permeated the group and gave FREEDOM its character and quality. Yet it cannot be emphasised too strongly that the comrades who kept FREEDOM's banner flying were the silent plodders behind the scene, they who did the daily grind, who met heroically the most difficult task, who gave their all without stint. Marsh, Wess, Cantwell, and since 1903

Tom Keell, as well as many others whose names I do not now recollect. It was their zeal, their devotion, their capacity for service even more than what the brilliant minds and powerful pens of the outstanding figures in the group gave which helped FREEDOM over the many obstacles in its thorny path.

Most Anarchists, like most Christians, seem to think that one must speak good only of the dead, the living need not to be talked about in kindness—that they do not miss the soothing hand of sympathetic understanding. Worse yet is the unfortunate tendency in our ranks to ignore the silent and unassuming souls whose whole life is dedicated to their ideal, and without whom the continued grind of propaganda, the thousand little details of the life of the movement, were utterly impossible. It seems to me that those who have the gift of word or pen, though of the utmost importance in revolutionary ranks, could yet accomplish little without the co-operation of the comrades who drudge on year after year without a murmur, who dedicate themselves to the health and life destroying task, to the daily routine ever present in our work. They, and not the dead, need to be encouraged, they need the help and solidarity to keep them going. I feel, therefore, that to speak of the forty years of FREEDOM and not to mention those who held its fort is only to relate half the story. Especially does this apply to the comrades who have kept the paper alive since the world catastrophe.

To be sure the life of FREEDOM was at no time a bed of roses; the struggle was always hard, the means precarious. But so long as there was oneness among its sponsors, so long as the spirit of solidarity prevailed, the task was not so difficult or painful as it has been since FREEDOM was left depleted and alone. That crucial moment came with the World-War—the first serious break between the founders of FREEDOM and the younger elements who had come into its life much later. The unfortunate estrangement in the group and the accompanying bitterness came near to destroying FREEDOM altogether. That this calamity was averted is due entirely to the few staunch souls whose constancy to the ideal and clear appraisal of the inevitable results of the war carried the day.

Only those who have themselves experienced the shock of seeing one's lifelong teachers and comrades caught in the snares of the war can appreciate the great sorrow of those who had to choose between their own integrity and their devotion to the men who had meant so much in their lives. When they had to part ways with Kropotkin, Tcherkesoff, and their followers, they chose their intellectual and spiritual independence, which would not permit them to turn the great fighter against all wars as capitalist wars into an apologist of the most capitalistic of all wars. That their choice was right the aftermath of the terrible world-conflagration has amply proven. But at the time of the conflict between Kropotkin and his followers on one side, and Malatesta, Shapiro, Keell, and a few others on the other side, the choice must have been hard and painful. But they hesitated not a minute, and thus saved FREEDOM a shameful end to a glorious beginning and a long heroic life. It is due entirely to them that the fortieth year of its birth finds the paper perhaps less brilliant in colour, less varied in thought, but not less strong, brave, and true than in its period of the highest water-mark.

With the numerous gifted contributors deserting FREEDOM, with the general disintegration in all radical ranks, and most of all in our own, that followed in the wake of the War and the Russian debacle, the struggle for existence became much more difficult. No paper can be filled month after month by two people and yet retain its richness of thought, colour, and fervour. The wonder is that FREEDOM can still give so much, that it has continued as the only clarion voice for the values of Anarchism in the political and social chaos of Great Britain. It could have done much more if the comrades were less aloof and indifferent, if by word and deed they would come to its support. Since the War it has been the perseverance of Tom Keell and the youthful zeal and able pen of our old comrade Wm. C. Owen that have made the survival of FREEDOM possible.

The first signs of small souls is their incapacity to outlive the past, to make allowance for difference of opinion. Such people are best out of the Anarchist movement. But the comrades who still have breadth of vision and who can see the urgent need of an Anarchist publication in England, a need greater than ever before, what are they doing to show their appreciation of the long and unflinching fight of FREEDOM? Are they not going to come to the assistance of the few whose herculean efforts have steered the paper through all these years, through all its storm and stress? One can only hope that there may be a revival of interest among British



comrades, that they may come to see the part FREEDOM could still play in the awakening of the masses from the political anaesthesia and the snares of dictatorship which now hold them in their clutches. One can only hope fervently that FREEDOM may again become a moral force in holding out the Anarchist ideal as the only safe road to social and economic emancipation and complete freedom from State control and interference in human life and collective effort in the world.

It seems to me that the only worthy way of celebrating a rich past is to help to make the future richer, finer, more purposeful. To do that for FREEDOM would be the greatest tribute to the memory of those who gave it birth, and it would give new courage to those whose indomitable will has helped it over all obstacles to its fortieth birthday of a heroic life.

EMMA GOLDMAN.

### GREETINGS TO "FREEDOM."

DEAR COMRADES,—You are celebrating the 40th year of your existence. This occasion gives us the opportunity to convey our fraternal greetings to you, and to express our love and thanks to the workers on FREEDOM, past and present, for the splendid achievement during the past forty years.

The year 1886 is a historic year for our movement. In May, 1886, began in Chicago the great struggle for the eight-hour day, ending with the martyrdom of our comrades; and in London FREEDOM was born, the first Anarchist organ in the English language.

Notwithstanding all the difficulties, financial and otherwise, you kept the ideal of Anarchism alive among the English-speaking people for the past four decades. Many, all too many, publications in England, and especially here in the United States, succumbed during that time; but the little FREEDOM kept on battling its way among the stormy waves.

How vividly do I remember the day, twenty-seven years ago, when I entered the historic home of FREEDOM in Ossulston Street! So many of the workers on FREEDOM went their way into Nirvana since then—Cantwell, Marsh, Louise Michel, Kropotkin, Tchaikovsky, Tcherkesoff—but others continued the work. Nettlau, Owen, Rocker, Malatesta, Kelly, our Emma Goldman, and you, dear Keell, are all active as ever. Malatesta, alas! is again in the clutches of the dark power. For a long time he was a thorn in the eye of the traitor Mussolini.

It seems symbolic to me that we, the children of FREEDOM of the Mother Country, living here among Colonial descendants, should choose the "road" to Freedom. Hail to you, our intellectual and spiritual mother!

HIPPOLYTE HAVEL.

For *The Road to Freedom*, Stelton, N.J.

COMRADES OF THE LONDON "FREEDOM,"—In the spirit of our great teacher, Peter Kropotkin, who contributed so much to the intellectual distinction of FREEDOM, we send our fraternal greetings on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of your existence.

ABRAHAM BLECHER, Secretary.  
Kropotkin Institute, Ferrer Colony,  
Stelton, N.J.

COMRADES OF "FREEDOM,"—The International Anarchist Group of New York takes the occasion of your forty years of struggle for our ideal to send fraternal greetings to you, hoping that you will keep the flag of Anarchy flying in Anglo-Saxondom till Freedom is achieved.

VERA HAINERT, Secretary.

DEAR COMRADES,—I am just starting on an agitational trip to Gratz when your letter reaches me saying that you would like a few words from me on the 40th anniversary of our dear FREEDOM. I still remember well the 25th anniversary, and can hardly believe that fifteen years have passed since then. As to FREEDOM itself, I have read it for over twenty-five years, and I can truly say with the greatest intellectual pleasure and benefit. FREEDOM has always been for me a stern incarnation of veracity in principle and uncompromising honesty in methods. On a barren ground of compromise, such as England is, surrounded by mediocrity of thought and action, and amidst shallowness, FREEDOM has always upheld the clarity of aim of Anarchy and the revolutionary thought of Direct Action, and has ever striven to give to the working class the best in theory and

tactics that has been produced by the brightest minds in the common struggle for social emancipation. Thus, FREEDOM is one of the greatest champions of Anarchism from an international standpoint. For many a struggling fighter for our cause it is a beacon light, and I wish it strength and endurance in its great struggle for our ideals. The thanks of mankind in the future are certain for those who work for Freedom.—Fraternally yours,

PIERRE RAMUS.

Greetings to your 40th birthday, dear comrades of FREEDOM.

ALEXANDER BERKMAN.

DEAR FREEDOM,—To be active during forty solid years, to keep true during this long period of ups and downs in our movement to the principles of the first day,—that is truly record-breaking. May FREEDOM's star finish by dazzling the slow mind of the British workingman and open before him *the* road to Freedom so long sought by him. Continue thy work with still greater energy and let us all hear from you at your semi-secular birthday what you think of the progress of our ideas within your island.

A. SCHAPIRO.

### MUSSOLINI ESCAPES THIS TIME.

On September 11 a bomb was thrown at Mussolini whilst riding through Rome in a motor-car. The bomb failed to explode at the right moment, and Mussolini was uninjured. But he was evidently scared by the attempt on his life, and later on the same day made a speech to his fanatical supporters in which he attacked France for harbouring Italian anti-Fascist plotters against the Italian Government. He also said he loved to live dangerously, but—"I cannot be periodically disturbed by a gang of criminals," and capital punishment would be introduced for such offences. Within a few hours over 1,000 were arrested in Rome, including Malatesta and 300 other Anarchists; but we are glad to say that our old and beloved comrade and some of his companions have since been released. The man who threw the bomb was immediately arrested and has been recognised as Gino Lucetti, an Italian Anarchist, who had come from France, where he had taken refuge from his Fascist persecutors. Below we print a translation of an article giving particulars of his life and character.

These attempts on the life of Mussolini are a natural outcome of the policy and methods of Fascism. It is the only form of protest open to the opposition in Italy, and until he ceases to exercise his tyrannical Dictatorship the murderer of Matteotti will continue to "live dangerously." It is simply a question of cause and effect.

GINO LUCETTI.

From *Le Reveil* (Geneva), October 2.

Once again we must not allow the Fascist and bourgeois press to calumniate a rebel who has committed merely an act of legitimate defence, as we proceed to prove by the declarations of his very persecutors. But first we give the following letter from a Marseilles comrade who knew Lucetti well:—

"He took refuge in France after having undergone, like all of us, an infinity of persecutions. But the work here at his trade of marble cutter did not suit him, and he made an attempt to live with his family in the country. He met with new threats, acts of violence and aggression, a veritable martyrdom; so much so that one evening he was attacked by a band of Fascists, under orders from the Fascist Secretary at Avenza. He was wounded by cudgel and revolver, and reduced to a sorry plight. However, he succeeded in escaping, and nursed himself while in hiding, for Fascists and police were searching for him. Later, by the help of friends, he was able to emigrate a second time.

"We saw him here once more, always under the nightmare of persecution. He had a large wound in the neck, where the ball had remained. Here he nursed himself carefully, and the ball was extracted. But he was always preoccupied, and after some time he left, to work at various places in the Maritime Alps. Last year, at Christmas, he came back here, and said that he had fifty francs which he wished to spend among the comrades.

"Over middle height, well dressed, cultured, and well acquainted with our doctrines, he studied a great deal, having a

marked leaning toward Individualism. He preferred to be with comrades of the same character, and showed himself kindly, tolerant, and active. He did not speak much, but when he did he expressed his opinion calmly and rhythmically. He never kept himself at a distance from anyone, and the pitiable polemics of these latter days grieved him. Whenever he spoke about them he, who never gave way to passion, would repeat angrily: 'That disgusts me.' . . . A good comrade, a good worker, and a good militant, we believe we do not deceive ourselves when we say that his act was inspired by profound personal resentment and by seeing our movement drag itself along in impotence. He wished to avenge himself on Fascism, and at the same time to give us a warning sharp enough to shake us out of our inaction. You can contradict the statement that he had any connection with Meschi, Campolongo, and the *Corriere degli Italiani*. His opinions were too set to allow of that."

To this letter we add the declaration of Lucetti's employer to one of the *Petit Provençal's* editors:—"Lucetti has always been an excellent worker. Very sober, there was nothing against him. Never in my presence did he manifest the least excitement. He read a great deal. For the rest, Lucetti was to me an honest workman for whom I had only praise."

This testimony is above suspicion, but here we have another which is even more so. We find it in the declaration the Fascist Secretary at Avenza has been good enough to make, which has been reproduced by the whole Italian press. After emphasising the bitterness of the struggle the Fascists have been waging against the entire workers' movement in that locality, he ends thus:—"Moreover, the Fascists of Avenza and Carrare have justly the merit of having conducted against Lucetti, Anarchist and anti-Italian, a struggle of the most iron type; so much so that Lucetti was obliged to take refuge abroad. The local Fascism, therefore, has nothing with which to reproach itself, for it well 'individualised' the dangerous enemy when it forced him to flee."

If one compares this with Mussolini's declaration that "if Fascism has been merely an association of criminals, it is I, the chief, who am responsible for this association of criminals," one sees that Lucetti's act was entirely justified by the most elementary logic. According to the Fascists' own avowal, he had undergone the severest persecution, and he laid the blame on the chief, as the one responsible for those persecutions.

Lucetti's whole family was arrested, but released after a few days. The press reports his mother as having declared: "My son never said anything to me, but I am proud of having brought him into the world." As for his brothers and sisters, "they have always had words of praise for Gino's courage."

Very good. As we hoped, the people has not lost its courage.

## WHEN MUSSOLINI PRAISED BOMBS.

Mussolini was very angry when Lucetti threw a bomb at him in Rome last month, but there were times, and not so very long ago, when he praised bomb-throwing—at others. We give a few instances.

On March 14, 1910, a workman fired a shot at the King of Italy. Speaking on the subject, at the Socialist Congress at Reggio-Emilie, July 8, 1910, Mussolini said:—

"After the attempt of March 14 the Socialists had only one duty—to be silent; that is to say, to regard the act as incidental to the rôle of king. Why get excited and weep for the king; only for the king? Why this hysterical, excessive sensibility when it is a question of crowned heads? Who is the king? The useless citizen, essentially. There are peoples who have sent their king packing, if, for their own better protection, they have not marched him to the guillotine; and these peoples have been in the vanguard of civic progress."

In the *Class War*, a Socialist paper of which Mussolini was editor, he wrote, July 9, 1910, in reference to a bomb explosion in a theatre at Buenos Aires:—

"I admit without discussion that in normal times bombs are not a Socialist form of action. But when a Government, be it Republican or Monarchist, gags you and places you outside the pale of humanity [which is precisely what the Fascist Government is doing to its political opponents]—Oh! then it does not become us to censure the violence that answers violence, even if it has the innocent for victims. I find many Socialists who are too often and too greatly moved by the misfortunes of the bourgeoisie, but stand impassive before those of the proletariat. . . . This one-sided sensibility is due to the residuum of Christianity still actively at work within them. It is Christianity that has imparted to us this morbid, effeminately hysterical pity. Socialism, on the contrary, is rude, rough, made up of contrasts and of violences. Socialism is War. And in War, woe be to the pitiful! They will be vanquished."

In the same paper, replying to a letter protesting against the

foregoing sentiments, Mussolini wrote at great length, under date of July 16, 1910, and said, in part:—

"If there arises an individual who chooses to answer the governmental reaction by a personal deed, ought we Socialists to be the first to curse him? Ought we to add our voices to the chorus of universal police and bourgeois execration? No! no! We ought, on the contrary, to comprehend and explain to ourselves the act: we ought to say that the fault is the Government's, and that he who sows the wind will reap the whirlwind."

These remarks he followed up with a review of Thiers' massacre of the Communards and other proletarian tragedies. "Are those who carry out an individual act," he asked, "Hero-fools? Heroes nearly always, but fools hardly ever. Was Angiolillo a fool; or Bresci; or Sophie Perovskaya? Oh, no!"

In the same paper, under date of September, 1911, he applauded vigorously the assassination of Stolypin, writing:—"Nemesis, the instrument of Justice, has struck him dead. Well was it done. Stolypin—the infamous, the sinister, the bloodthirsty—deserved his doom." In 1912 we find him defending, in *Pagine Libere*, the Russians who were killed in Sidney Street, on the ground that the upper class should be "made to understand from time to time that below the surface volcanic explosions are in process of preparation. It is a salutary shaking-up, an appeal launched by the voice of dynamite." And finally, as recently as September 8, 1918, we find him writing thus, in *Popolo d'Italia*, respecting the Socialist Congress then being held in Rome:—

"I believe that, so far as the goal of the human species and progress are concerned, the deed of an intrepid bomb-thrower is worth far more than all the orders of the day and babblings, in Rome, of these two hundred scoundrelly priests who arrogate to themselves the rights, and, alas! enjoy the prerogative, of acting as the saviours of poor Humanity, as sorrow-stricken as it is misled."

We could extend our citations indefinitely, but it would be superfluous. And this is the fellow our Aristocracy, speaking through its favourite mouthpiece, the *Morning Post*, is not ashamed to worship!

## "The Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist."

The C. W. Daniel Company has just published a splendid new edition of Alexander Berkman's famous book, with an Introduction by Edward Carpenter. The price is 10s. 6d. We hope to publish a review in our next issue.

CASH RECEIVED (not otherwise acknowledged).

(September 1 to October 5.)

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