

Freedom

A JOURNAL OF ANARCHIST COMMUNISM.

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ANARCHIST PROPAGANDA.

It is not a mere empty saying which reminds us that each one has within him some capacity to help mould the future. It may seem infinitely small to ourselves or to others, but energy and intelligence will increase its effect a hundredfold. Yet, even if small, it cannot be dispensed with, because in social evolution as well as in the domain of physical phenomena many things are accomplished by apparently ineffective but oft-repeated efforts, as, in time, the drops of water wear the stone.

If we regard Anarchist propaganda in the same light, we shall find that great opportunities for educating the public mind come seldom; but the occasions when our individual efforts, whether in speech or action, can be applied in ever so limited a degree, are always with us.

If it were possible to form an accurate estimate of the work accomplished by Socialists and Anarchists in England during the past fifteen years, we should certainly find that while a really considerable number of workers have a fairly distinct idea of what Socialism means, not one in twenty has any clear ideas as to how it could be obtained. On the other hand, although comparatively few have as yet become convinced Anarchists, they at least are clear as to the effective means that can be employed to overthrow the rule of the capitalist. The tendency of the Social Democrat—and we say it with regret—is to confine himself to the struggle for municipal and political reforms. He neglects the economic, the revolutionary propaganda, and after years of voting finds nothing is gained for the people to "ameliorate" their condition.

A much wider field of activity is open to the Anarchist, though requiring a greater determination and a deeper moral conviction to adhere to it. In every factory and in every field toil the men and women we wish to educate and to enlighten. We do not seek their votes; we ask them to think and to act, to unite and to organise, to encourage the spirit of solidarity on all possible occasions. And to restore to themselves the land, the factories, the accumulated wealth stolen from them through the centuries of exploitation, we do not ask that they should send us to mingle with the thieves at Westminster; but, rather, to use the weapon they have in their own hands—a weapon dreaded by their masters far more than all their votes, the only weapon, we verily believe, that will conquer the world for the workers—the GENERAL STRIKE.

How can it be said, then, that Anarchists have either to talk vaguely of a distant ideal, or resort to secret societies and a system of terrorism in their propaganda? As to the "idealists," Bakunin has shown us who they really are; the Terrorist only arises when political liberties are suppressed, or when some terrible economic crisis drives starving men to desperation.

No, the propaganda of Anarchism is the driving home to the minds of the people the hard, the real, the matter-of-fact truths of every-day life. The difficulty is not in getting the people to accept these, but in sweeping away, in rooting out the political, the religious, the economic lies and illusions which are instilled everywhere and always by the ruling classes and their parasites.

What sane person does not wish to enjoy the life which under present conditions is too often but a miserable existence? We claim that right for the whole of humanity. Who wishes, day after day, to be at the beck and call, to do the bidding of another? Not one of us. Therefore we demand human liberty, not as a favor, but as a thing as necessary to individual welfare as the air we breathe. What can be more practical than the earnest endeavor to obtain these things? And this is the goal of Anarchist propaganda. Hard, uphill work it may be; but it does not deceive the people with promises unfulfilled. With clear consciences we can repeat to them again and again: "If you would end your slavery, organise for the General Strike. But hold on to the means of production which lie ready to your hands, and use them for the benefit of all."

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AMERICAN NOTES.

Of political news from America this month there is plenty: what with the official war in the Philippines and the unofficial one in China, and with McKinley dancing the political tight-rope with a balance-pole one end of which is marked "Yes, I'm in favor of expansion," the other end marked "No, I'm not in favor of expansion." All of which makes an interesting spectacle, even from this distance. The political fires have been lighted and we shall probably soon hear of three thousand mile speeches and pilgrimages to Canton. The "sage" of Canton will tell the pilgrims who have their fares paid to his abiding-place of the beneficent results of his reign, of the gold standard and protection, supplemented by the glories of expansion and the exploits of Teddy Roosevelt in Cuba. On the other hand, the silver tongued orator of Nebraska will tell his hearers from the platform of a railway car how easy it will be for the farmer to pay his debts at 16 to 1, and so everyone will be happy. He will tell them other things: some good, some bad, some indifferent; and so it goes.

But how are the workers getting on? that's what we want to know. Chicago is in the throes of a strike which will rank as one of the greatest the country has seen. The Building Trades are fighting for their very lives. The federated employers, with subtle irony, demand the dissolution of the Building Trades Council; if this is accomplished the unions can be smashed to pieces, one by one, with ease and impunity. The strike has been on for some months now, and the unions are fighting bravely. The latest phase of the affair was several weeks ago, when that diminutive-minded man, Carter Harrison, by the grace of god Mayor of Chicago, ordered a parade of the police force with gatling guns to terrify the strikers by marching past and raiding their headquarters. The Social Democrats are in evidence, as usual, with their advice to vote for class-conscious Socialists at the next election. So it stands. How it will end it is hard to say; but, from my knowledge of Chicago, I should say it would very likely result in a compromise, a defeat for the strikers, but with the Building Trades Council left intact. We have gone too far to allow the council of federated trades to be destroyed. The capitalists know this and only make their attack on that principle in order to defeat the workers in other points. We may be sure of one thing: the workers will get the worst of it.

The strike in St. Louis was settled, but the companies broke the agreement, so it is on again as fiercely as ever. The Broadway line, one of the principal lines in the city, has over 500 cars lying in its sheds, smashed by the strikers and their sympathisers; and the line itself (nearly 16 miles in length) is almost a wreck (the line is a cable one) from the explosives used by the strikers. The company have some horse cars running and are offering £1 per day to each person who will ride in them; each car has two deputy sheriffs armed with shot guns and they are ordered to shoot at the slightest provocation. The temper of the capitalists can be seen in the fact that three little tobacco factory girls, aged from twelve to fourteen years, have each been sentenced to two years imprisonment for the stripping of women who rode on the cars. An acquaintance of mine was crossing the street and was nearly run over by one of the incompetent blacklegs; he turned and said: "Why don't you look where you are going, you damned scab?" A deputy sheriff jumped off the car, put a shot gun to his breast and arrested him; he was out on \$500 bail when I heard of him last.

The strikers have received from Adolphus Bush, the millionaire brewer, a loan of 200 omnibuses, and with these and a large number of wagons, of all shapes and sizes, are running in opposition to the companies; they charge the same price (5 cents) and are doing fairly well. The strike would probably have been crushed before this only the Governor (a Democrat) refuses to call out the militia to help the Mayor (a Republican). The sheriff wants 2,000 deputies, to reinforce the police; and even that number will hardly be sufficient. But 2,000 will be hard to get and we can only wish good luck to the strikers.

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NOTES.

AN ETHICAL HUMORIST.

None of our contemporaries do we peruse with more pleasure than the *Ethical World*. Its position is unique amongst democratic journals inasmuch as, in addition to brilliant writers on political and economic subjects, its staff is blessed with a decided humorist.

Stanton Coit has been consistently amusing for weeks past. His effusions on a democratic "Hamlet," "Anarchist," "Cecil Rhodes," etc., have been excruciatingly funny. No one can deny his originality, either; for nowhere does such a creature as his Anarchist exist—except in his own fanciful imagination. His "democratic Hamlet" is a marvellous creation; whilst the subtle humor of his "Idealist Rhodes" is greatly heightened by a careful study of his colleague's (J. A. Hobson) opinions on the same gentleman.

MORRIS, SHAW, COIT AND THE PEOPLE.

But, undoubtedly, his crowning joke is his courageous attack on the memory of William Morris. With the sparsest materials (an alleged chance remark of G. B. Shaw) he portrays Morris's "contempt of the masses" to the extent of two columns. His grim humour is very apparent to those who, like ourselves, knew and loved Morris. Many times, when he has been attacked on the ground that the people were sinful and stupid and not worth fighting for, have we heard Morris declare that to live sane, steady, honest lives under the adverse conditions of the people was heroism, and we had no right to expect heroism from ordinary men and women.

Those who did not know Morris personally will get some idea of his intense love of the people by reading *A Dream of John Ball* and *A King's Lesson*; whilst anyone will be able to at once appreciate Stanton Coit's wonderful gift of imagination by procuring a photo of the "idealist" Cecil Rhodes and comparing it with the "ignoramus" William Morris.

A TREAT IN STORE.

We have not read much of Stanton Coit's; but we shall certainly lose no time in getting a pamphlet, *What Think Ye of Christ?* for seeing what his brilliant imagination can do with his contemporaries, though hampered with facts and the popular knowledge, we tremble with anticipation when we realise to what height he might soar when dealing with the memory of a man who has been dead two thousand years.

TREB.

Just recently a young Frenchman came before Mr. Fordham (the magistrate) for advice. Having to leave England, he left his wife in charge of a German friend. On his return he found his wife living with the German and was refused admission to the house. He, however, didn't want his wife but his child and furniture. Mr. Fordham told him he was entitled to both and could take them. Then the Frenchman explained that he was not legally married to the woman. Whereupon Mr. Fordham made the following remarks:

That makes all the difference. You cannot have any control over the woman; you cannot claim the child. You must not force your way into her house, and she has a perfect right to live with the German if she chooses. As to the furniture, you must sue in the county court for it. If you leave your lover in the care of another man you cannot be surprised if she gets fond of him.

The moral of which should be plain enough to all women: Don't marry if you want your liberty, your person and your children respected.

The *Daily News* commits itself to the following dictum: "No man has a right to make a profit at the cost of his fellow creatures' health or lives." Well and good! But if we apply this principle to the capitalist system, and enforce it as the *Daily News* pretends it would like to do, how much of it should we have left? Everyone knows it would sweep the world clear of exploitation and wipe the capitalist system off the face of the earth. For that reason it is simply hypocrisy for the *Daily News* to indulge in moral maxims that take it entirely out of its depths. Far better confine itself to the advocacy of the dastardly capitalist war in South Africa. It seems to us that no opportunity

should be lost of disputing the position taken by the Pharisees of the middle classes—whose gospel is the gospel of getting on, of plundering the people by means of rent, profit and interest, and who have nothing whatever to do with moral principles.

AN OPEN LETTER TO ANARCHISTS.

(TRANSLATED FROM *Les Temps Nouveaux* OF JUNE 9—15.)

[We print below Merlino's "Open Letter to Anarchists," translated from *Les Temps Nouveaux* of June 9—15, and Malatesta's reply thereto. It is with more regret than surprise that we find Merlino treading the slippery paths of compromise and expediency; but it is with nothing less than astonishment that we find him advising Anarchists to defend themselves by adopting political tactics. He must have known how this advice would be received by all Anarchists who are Anarchists. He cannot so soon have forgotten Anarchist principles as not to know that to enter the political arena is to cease to be an Anarchist. There is no escaping that fact if we argue for a thousand years. But Merlino's mistake is obvious even from his own point of view. No Anarchist would ever be permitted to effectively present his ideas or defend his principles in any parliamentary assembly. Has not the fate of even State Socialists taught Merlino this? Has he forgotten Keir Hardie's experience in the English House of Commons? and does he not see that such a mild Socialist as John Burns has to speak to the people in Battersea Park to tell them his real convictions? Those who believe as Merlino does must go his way and do their best, but they will never be Anarchists.]

DEAR FRIENDS,—Although I no longer militate in your ranks, I still follow with fraternal solicitude the vicissitudes of yourselves and of your struggle to conquer the right to exist as a party and to openly carry on the propaganda of your ideas.

Your constancy equals your courage; the cowardice of the government alone equals these, when it flings itself upon you who are few and misunderstood whilst dealing less harshly with Republicans and Socialists. But, friends, just because my heart is with you, it pains me to see you engaged in this unequal combat upon an unfavorable field, when there is a simple economic method by which to reach your aim, by which to conquer.

I am convinced that were you to select the most formidable and most persecuted comrade amongst you—Erriko Malatesta, for example—and make every effort, with the help of other popular parties, to have him elected as a deputy, that the government would be forced to lay down its arms against your propaganda by speech or writing and your association as a party. It seems to me mathematically certain that before one of your number, able to enjoy a free pass on railways and parliamentary immunity for infractions of Arts. 247 and 251, and the *domicilio coatto*, and who could denounce daily before a parliamentary tribunal the oppressions and arbitrary measures committed against you by the gold-laced and uniformed servants of the executive power—the government would be made to look extremely small, and would end by listening to reason and learn to measure you with the same standard as other political parties. In this manner you would cheaply gain the right to exist denied you today, and for which you provoke the most iniquitous persecutions, because it is the first condition under which to develop every programme and the ultimate triumph of every idea.

I know the objections you are accustomed to make to those who speak to you in this way, and I may even concede that these objections have a certain value. But there is no light without shadow, there is no idea which in its application does not present some inconvenience.

What appears to me of capital importance for you, for the future of Socialism and for the cause of liberty, is, that you acquire the right of citizenship in the Italian State and enter in among the ranks of the popular parties.

Should you reach a similar conclusion, you should assuredly sacrifice an idea to which you have obstinately clung for years—and which is perhaps a prejudice—and I exhort you to do this. The present moment demands energetic action and not academical discussions.

Affectionately,

S. MERLINO.

(From *L'Italia Nuovo di Roma*, of May 22, 1900.)

ANSWER TO MERLINO:

MY DEAR GRAVE.—The political elections are about to take place in Italy, and our old comrade, Merlino, has had the absurd idea to publish a "Letter to Anarchists," in which he invites them to enter the political (say: electoral) lists and to propose my candidature.

I learn now that several French journals, when mentioning this matter, inquire whether I intend to "take the leap."

I beg you to announce that I repudiate all responsibility for the use of my name by Merlino; that I remain an Anarchist as always, and that I consider as an unmerited outrage the simple doubt that I could wish to enter the parliamentary arena.

As to the Italian Anarchists, they know well at what value to appraise Merlino's attempt.

Cordially yours,

ERRICO MALATESTA.

THE PYRAMID OF TYRANNY.

By F. DOMELA NIEUWENHUIS.

III. THE PRESS.—To the powers that be belongs, no doubt, the Press. It exercises a great influence on the people because it speaks to them daily; and the proverb, "Tell me with whom thou goest, and I will tell thee what thou doest," may be applied to the newspapers people read. A man can get accustomed to wholesome food—but, also, to poison; and it is astonishing what a large quantity of the latter he can take without feeling hurt, provided he begins with small doses. "Falsehood is a European Power,"—this winged word of Lussalle's may be called to memory once more; and, seeing that capitalism handles this weapon and at the same time uses the Press, we need not wonder that the people, being so corrupted by lies from day to day, become more so.

In whose hands is the Press?

In those of the great capitalists.

Is this assertion contested? By nobody. We know, indeed, that the bankers have made themselves masters of the press, to use it in their own interest. That is the reason why the post of editor of a capitalist newspaper really is one of the vilest situations in the world. He is the mouth through which capitalism speaks; he is the pen with which it writes; he is the tool that, on pain of dismissal, must dance to the capitalists' piping. A mental prostitute, sold to the money-bag, he is more abject than the poor prostitute who sells her body to the first comer, hoping to get something to eat by doing so. And woe to him who will act judge and act independently! Very soon he is informed of the necessity to submit or be dismissed. Intelligence concerning the Theatres, Exchange, Art, all this is ordered work and, at sufficient prices, criticisms may be bought to suit your purpose. Woe to those who rely on the information in the press—which differs from day to day, just as capital requires! War reports are invented to cause a rise or fall on 'Change, and to take advantage of it. Mr. Capitalist sends word to his paid knight of the press ordering him to launch some report in the world. By and by, we read that in some country menacing events have taken place which render war unavoidable. And the consequences are obvious: there is a fall in stocks. Mr. Capitalist, who knows better, has agents in different places who buy up all the stocks which have fallen in consequence of that report. After this, he makes the same newspapers report that, owing to the dexterity and adroitness of some diplomatist, the menacing danger of war has disappeared; the stocks are much in demand, they rise, and our honest speculator sells them again. He fills his pockets with the difference between the rise and the fall in price, caused intentionally by a falsehood; and he is praised into the bargain when he hands over a trifling sum to the poor and destitute while retaining an immense treasure for himself.

In this way the lower classes are bereft of what belongs to them in order to enrich the great capitalists with their hard-earned money. And in these editors they have meek and submissive tools, who do everything according to the orders they get. Very great is the influence of the Press; and Capital, well aware of it, would be inexcessably stupid if it did not avail itself of this precious means. In every scandal—and all sorts of scandals follow one another so rapidly in our days that we can hardly keep our eyes on them—the Press is interested, and we read of large sums of money laid out in bribing the Press. The simple, soft, easy people are still silly enough not to perceive all this; and that is the reason why they are continually led by the nose.

The would-be popular newspapers are for the greater part capitalistic enterprises, and so the people suffer the capitalistic knights of the Press to lead them for the greater glory and enrichment of their oppressors.

If this were not the case, what could be the cause of the hostile tendency in everything regarding the working-class movement. What else could be the cause of the praise of manufacturers and capitalists? Every trifle is blazoned forth and spread abroad on the wings of fame. Insignificant information about princes and highly-placed personages fill up the columns of the papers, which might be used in the general interest. Ever and anon the people are set against those who are helping the workers to free themselves from the bonds of capitalism. Is it not capital and learning that, in newspapers and other writings, go faithfully hand in hand to keep the people submissive. Learning says: Capital is the greatest blessing for mankind, you live by it, and your family and thousands with you. Blessed, thrice blessed capital, without which the world would go back to the period of barbarism! Such is the hymn in praise of Capital sung by the whole of the Press and by the official, paid scientists. And Capital says: Do listen to the voice of Science; these clever men will instruct and advise you for your own good! Thus the paid scientist defends Capitalism, and capitalists protect Science. Here the well-known proverb is applicable: it is diamond cut diamond. They both enjoy privileges, and neither of them thinks the world is so bad. Woe to him who incurs the displeasure of these powers; he is first undone and ruined materially so that spiritually he is compelled to keep quiet. And to those not willing to submit the following words, used in one of our most influential papers, are applied: "They raise a rebellious cry, ominous for every country appreciating its safety and order." As if the very safety of the possessing classes was not the chief cause of the great insecurity of the masses. And Order!—who dares speak of order in a world where the greatest disorder exists? Matters are systematically represented inversely by the Press, and that is why it is so difficult to have a counterpoise against those means of power; for these people have much influence.

The Press in the hands of capitalism is worse than any plague; for, instead of enlightening, its task is to tell lies. It poisons every source, and whatever is touched by its capitalistic breath is corrupted and spreads contagion on all sides.

Suppose for a moment that all the paid scientists (who dispose of an undeniably great quantity of knowledge), that all the ecclesiastics of every religion, that all the knights of the Press set to work together to prepare a better future—and such a one must come; for there is nobody but acknowledges that our society is sick to death—what progress could be made! Things must be very bad indeed, when one sees how a man of capital, the banker A. C. Wertheim, without being contradicted, brought the following accusations against society a few years ago at a meeting of the *Society for the Promotion of the General Good*, consisting for the greater part of contented bourgeois: "Labor is excessive, wages are insufficient, food is bad, the surround-

ings depressing, education neglected, knowledge defective, the material wants of living together, dwelling and arrangement *dismeyarded*. We yearn for fresh air both in the material and moral sense of the expression." In other words, hardly anything is sufficient in this world. And yet the preservation of this society is represented as being in the *interest of all men!* And yet we hear its praise sounded as if everything was for the best, in the best of worlds! And yet it is the very men of science and learning, who are contented with the trifles thrown to them by capital, it is the men of the Press who praise the capitalistic system day by day!

You shall know the tree by its fruit. Well, what is the fruit of the tree? is it really such that one may conscientiously praise it? By no means. And therefore they are advocates of a bad cause: they render services to the oppressors against the oppressed; they abuse their knowledge, the faculties of their minds, to defend capitalism with sophistries. But their cause is hopeless; for "though the people's brain may be spoiled for a long time, it is not so easy to put their stomachs in irons." Well, these very stomachs begin to itch, and though our learned and scientific men scratch all the white paper black to prove that this condition cannot possibly be improved, and that capitalists—from mere love of the people—do their utmost to put a stop to the worst inequalities and the most awful contrasts: in the long run they will not be able to keep the people dull. The movement is growing beyond them and will, undoubtedly, drag along many and various things which, owing to the stubbornness of the possessors and the false information of the knights of the Press, now will be destroyed, but which might have been saved and spared if the lawful claims of the people had been complied with in good time.

So we see that this means of power, too, is of the utmost importance. Capitalists perceived, and they were quite right from their point of view, that the very Press (under the pretence of developing) might be useful to them to confound and stupefy the minds of the people gradually and daily.

These spiritual means of power are much stronger than all the rest; at least it is our opinion that they exercise the greatest influence. But they are not the only ones, they go hand in hand with the second kind, which we are now going to speak about in detail. We mean:

THE VIOLENT MEANS OF EXERCISING POWER.

(To be continued.)

"LEST WE FORGET."

A pathetic ceremony is shortly to take place in Manchester which carries one's mind back to other days and other men. There are few Irish Socialists, still fewer Irish Anarchists, for the reason that Paddy is so convinced he can gain Home Rule, even Separation, by parliamentary methods that he hugs his vote to his breast as he does his priest: heaven is only to be obtained through the one, a free Ireland through the other. But in spite of their contempt for ballots and ballot-mongers, English and foreign Anarchists have a well of brotherly feeling for the Irish, as men ever ready to rebel against a reactionary government and to struggle for their own ideal of liberty. The pity is that when sucking the sugarplums always offered at restive moments by Castle authorities and Chief Secretaries, they forget the hand on the rein and the fact that no Englishman can be talked into doing anything he does not want to do—you must hit him first and hit him hard; then he respects and will perhaps listen to you. History, and especially the history of Ireland, has proved this again and again. Moreover, the governing classes, like such classes everywhere, are easily frightened if you go the right way about it; and, when the rule of Funk obtains, there is precious little an Irishman can't squeeze out of an English Ministry. On Aug. 5th an incident in point occurs which takes us back only some 30 years and is one of many facts that prove the ease with which England may be made to tremble. The trouble at such times is that owing to want of organisation the terror-inspired cannot always be pushed home. Ireland would have a different story to tell today had she been able to follow up any one of the many panics into which she has thrown England since 1798. The ceremony we write of becomes an impressive fact, moreover, because it owes its origin to the event that first led Parnell as a young man to brood over English injustice and vindictiveness and which became the mainspring of his undying hatred against the English government if not the English nation. On the 5th inst. a memorial to the "Manchester Martyrs"—the three innocent men who were done to death to gratify an English public and appease that most bloodthirsty of cormorants, English law—will be unveiled at Mostyn Cemetery, Manchester. Few Englishmen remember, no Irishmen forget that story. How one autumn day in 1867 the Fenian leaders, Deasy and Kelly, were being driven to the jail from the police court; how an attack by comrades was made on the van, the prisoners freed and the guard, Brett, killed. He was never fired at—even a policeman swore at the trial that Allen's shot was aimed only to break the van lock though it pierced the door and killed the officer inside. Three men who had carried out the attack, and a fourth who was not even present, were, as in the case of the Chicago Anarchists, at once charged with wilful murder, even though but one hand fired the shot and that without intent to injure. "No man in this court," said Allen, "regrets the death of Sergeant Brett more than I do, and I positively say in the presence of the Almighty and ever-living God that I am innocent—aye, as innocent as any man in this court. I don't say this for the sake of mercy. I want no mercy, I'll have no mercy. I'll die, as many thousands have died, for the sake of their beloved land and in defence of it." Condon was reprieved; Allen, Larkin and O'Brien were condemned to death. England, ever thirsty for vengeance and retaliation exulted in savage glee; the men of Manchester and neigh-

bouring places danced around the prison of the doomed men, hooting and singing *Rule Britannia*; the government, terrified by the audacity of three Irishmen who dared to stop a police-van and by accident shoot a policeman, sought to crush the Fenianism it feared. But that murder of three innocent men roused the Ireland of that day into one solid fighting line, and set the spark alight that roared into flame under Parnell.

John Bright is dead. His words were once honored and treasured by Lancashire men; and of these martyrs and of their murderers he said boldly: "It may be urged positively that only one man in a certain sense was guilty.....If these three men had been out on a poaching expedition, and in the conflict one keeper was killed by one shot and three men were tried for it, I believe there is no judge who would have sentenced, and no Home Secretary who would have thought it his duty to advise that these three men should be hanged for the offence.....I believe that the three men were hanged because it was a political offence....I have always held the opinion that I held then, and hold now, that it was solely because it was a political case that three men were hanged for the death of one man."

Parnell was not a Fenian because (like Kruger) he felt that until every farmer and farmer's man had a good rifle and as many cartridges to his hand as "pertats," a rising was hopeless; he talked, and his cold, determined words were hated in the House. But others hit out and only those who had anything to do with the Ireland of the eighties, know the terror which convulsed the Castle and its satellites during those years. As we say: if only that terror had been pressed home. But then, as always, the doers and the talkers could not agree. Yet it was dread of Fenianism that led England to give Ireland disestablishment and land reform; it was Fenianism combined with dynamite that led Gladstone to understand the depth of Irish discontent and resolve to remove it. "I must make one admission," said he once in the House, "and that is, that without the Land League the Act of 1881 would not now be on the Statute-book." "It will take an earthquake to settle the land question," some one once said to Parnell. "Then we must have an earthquake," was the reply. And history proves the Unionist was right who said: "There is no use in any Irishman approaching an English Minister on Irish questions unless he comes with the head of a landlord in one hand or the tail of a cow in the other." For the present the days of landlord's heads and cow's tails are over, nor would we have them back; but the days of England's remorselessness and hunger for revenge for a political offence are not over. She would act today as she did 30 years ago, when she hung three men for the accidental act of one—when she thrust three men into a felon's grave in Manchester and called it justice. Let us remember.

ENGLAND FOR THE ENGLISH.

(Being an unacknowledged letter to the EDITOR of *The Clarion*.)

DEAR SIR,—I have just been reading your article on "War," and I am simply astounded at the position you take up. What, O what do you mean? You say: "I am not an Imperialist and never was; but I am English.....and I want to see England do credit to herself." So do I. But in what way? Let us argue this matter a little. I am the son of an English workman. My father, like the English (and all other) workmen was necessarily poor. Had he been rich, I might have been born in France, America or Australia; but, being poor, he did not travel further than Blackpool, or Belle Vue, and I was born in England. I didn't select England to be born in. Nobody consulted me about it. They simply dumped me down here and I was born an Englishman.

There is nothing to be proud of in that, so far as I can see. It is simply a geographical fact. Well, being born amongst, and having grown up with English workers, I have studied their lives and do not see anything to be proud of in their condition. I have known the tramp and the pauper, and have slept on the plank bed in an English prison. I have attended the Church of England services in the prison chapel;—ugh! I have wandered up and down the streets of our great cities. I know London—the centre of the Empire, the richest city of the world. I know Windsor Court, in the Strand where the inquest was held on a baby the other day. I used to peregrinate weekly round some of the most pestiferous quarters on earth, near the Strand, Seven Dials, Covent Garden, Drury Lane, etc., for the great "Thrift Philanthropic Assurance Co., Ltd." (it is a pathetic fact that the English workman will deny himself a warm shirt whilst living, for the prospect of a winding-sheet when dead), and I never saw anything to make me particularly proud of being an Englishman. Yes, I know the better part of the city, too. I have strolled down Park Lane, and gazed on the "English" mansions—including the unfinished one of Barnato, now occupied by another "Sheeny"; and I have reflected painfully and sorrowfully: that your cry of "England for the English" does not apply to the West End, but only to the East End of our cities; that you unmercifully condemn the poor "greener" who in Bethnal Green takes five shillings for ten shillings' worth of work, whilst ignoring the much greater rascal, the English or Jewish employer who pockets the difference; that you smother with invective the poor wretches who crowd 15 or 20 into a room whilst excusing the Barnatos, Sassoons, Ecksteins, Joels, Beits and other West-End-mansion dwellers, who rob us of millions of pounds where the other poor creatures only take pence. And you are afraid that we shall lose our colonies! Our colonies! Holy Bugaboo! why, I can hardly pay my rent for permission to live in this country; you can have my share of the precious colonies.

But take my case again; for it is typical of hundreds of thousands of my fellows. I work many hours in this city of Blank for 25s. weekly. I have three children, and they cause me great anxiety; for I know how and where they ought to live, and I know how and where they do live. Many things, which they ought not to, they will see and hear because they are poor; and poverty and crime are as closely allied as poverty and phthisis, or bad drainage and typhoid. Now, I do not see that it will be any advantage for them to die in an English workhouse

of poverty, or in an English hospital of disease (acquired at honest toil, perhaps, like "phosy jaw," lead poisoning, etc.), or in an English prison of "crime" (in many cases self-preservation). Yet any of these fates might befall them. And, if they are more fortunate, yet many thousands of children—and English children too—children as bonnie as yours and mine Nunquam, will suffer in these ways.

"I want to see England do credit to herself." She will never do credit to herself while these things exist. Nunquam, why will you be drawn off the track? Why do you not arrange yourself with the greatest minds of the century, viz., Morrison Davidson, Dangle, and Myself and declare boldly that at the bottom of this War Question is the Social Question, the war between the rich man and the poor man. Nothing else matters.

I never felt so angry with you as now, yet I never felt so convinced of your "straightness" and earnestness, or so sure of your sincerity. I know your heart is right, but you are mistaken—woefully mistaken. I do not write to abuse you, but simply to express the hope that when in this storm you have found your sea legs you will take a strong and sane view of the elements; and, further, that in the trying days which are near at hand, when Oppression and Freedom are closed in deadly strife, you and I will be found on the same side of the barricade.

Feb. 4th, 1900.

AN ANARCHIST.

WILL THEY SOLVE THE SOCIAL PROBLEM?

I happened, on Sunday, June 17th, to meet a friend on the street who told me there was to be a Social Democratic meeting that evening and that Anarchists were invited to take part in the discussion. In due course I found myself at the place indicated, and was informed that the subject for discussion was that fruitful one: "The Present War." I expected to hear matter showing deep reflection on the part of people calling themselves Social Democrats and Internationalists, and who claim for themselves great intelligence in social matters. State power and Capitalism having involved this country in a war of eight months, during which thousands and thousands of lives on each side had been lost, it was natural to suppose that these thoughtful, intelligent Social Democrats would have something to say worth listening to. The audience was not large: consisting, as the Chairman remarked, mainly of advanced Radicals and Social Democrats, with a sprinkling of Anarchists. The lecturer opened his address by declaring, to my astonishment, that he had been a soldier for ten years, and he then proceeded to discuss the tactics employed by the British generals in the South African war, confining himself largely to a criticism of their military methods, and to how far these were good or bad. During question time, I ventured to ask whether he considered that English workers in whole or part, who were conscious of a social question could take any interest in military affairs, or whether they are desiring disarmament! The answer I received was, that English workers would leave the settlement of such questions to their masters. In the discussion which followed, a second retired soldier remarked that the question which had been put was irrelevant to the matter under discussion. A Social Democrat very humbly declared that what he wanted to advocate was Peace! Hereupon a third soldier stated that since we could not dispense with an army under the present social system, since an army was absolutely required to keep order, he desired to see that army a good one. The only moment when there seemed any life in the discussion, was when a third retired soldier began to enumerate the best artificial methods for training men to shoot straight if they wanted to hit the bull's-eye; said methods, however, being too expensive for general use. Whereupon, Tom Mann, the Chairman, laughed in such a manner that the speaker was nearly put out of countenance, and twice begged for leave to proceed.

For my own part, I do not think that laughter alone will exorcise military tendencies from the Socialist movement. What is more likely to succeed is the declaration that the whole matter of military organisation and institutions is inimical to the Socialist movement and to all independent thought which is not merely bourgeois in form. It is possible that the Chairman or someone else made some such suggestion during the evening; but, finding it impossible to become interested in the proceedings, I left early. I fear, however, that it is more likely our Socialist friends spent the rest of their time discussing the point: whether the tactics, the guns, and the military regulations used in the war were good, or whether it would be better in the next war to employ other tactics, other guns and other regulations. H. N.

[Since writing the above report, I have been informed they did so.]

LIVERPOOL LIBERTARIAN GROUP.

Propaganda has been good here for the past two months. Comrades here came to the conclusion that there was room for two groups; and, having put the idea into practice, there is now one group of the above name and one known as the Everton Group. "Rampant Jingoism" here appears to be gradually dying out. Our sale of literature has been good, though not so well in July as in June. We wish to make the Group a success, and invite active and sincere comrades to join us in the work. At present we meet every Tuesday night between 8 and 10, at the Cocoa Rooms in Commutation Row, three doors from Islington and facing the Monument. All willing to join us or to know more of Anarchism are invited there and they can depend upon being welcome. Anyone requiring literature can get it during the week of comrade Despres, 98 Prescott Street.—W. ANDERSON.

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