

Freedom

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Glimpses into the Labour Movement in this Country.

Looking through the files of *Freedom* since its first appearance in October, 1886, till the present date, we gather through it the whole history of the Labour movement in this country for the last twenty-one years.

A history full of meaning and of lessons for the future. For we see in it how a movement, full of a youthful revolutionary energy, of great ideals and broad conceptions, and full of promises of a complete renovation of society, was brought, step by step, by its own faults, to abandon all these ideals and to become what it is now,—an occasional patching up by means of bureaucratic Parliamentary legislation of a few of the most crying injustices from which Labour is suffering; a picking up, out of the masses of the workers, of the few of those who render themselves acceptable to the bourgeoisie and are taken into its ranks; a truce between the representatives of the exploited workers and the exploiters, on the understanding that both of them shall exploit, for their common benefit, the black and the yellow races, and both shall share, more or less, in the toll levied by England upon the industrially backward nations.

Compromise all round. A science worked out to support compromise. Socialism brushed aside, and Social Democracy slipped instead; which means submissive acceptance by the working men of the capitalist exploitation, with but a few limitations conceded from time to time by a capitalist Legislature against some of its most offensive forms.

To tell the history of the degradation of a great and mighty movement, and to tell how the Anarchists and their English organ, *Freedom*, endeavoured to oppose that degradation, would require, of course, more than a few columns. Therefore, we shall limit ourselves to a few broad outlines.

In 1886, the year when *Freedom* was founded, a most enthusiastic Socialist movement was going on in this country. It was a Socialist—not a Social Democratic—movement; whose ideal was that of a society entirely reconstructed on the basis of a social revolution: the working men's organisations entering in possession of all that is necessary for the production of wealth—the land, the mines, the railways, the factories—and working them in the interests of the community.

A severe industrial crisis which had broken out in 1886, throwing out of employment great numbers of workers, both skilled and unskilled, contributed to render the movement still more acute. A small riot even took place in London, when, after a Trafalgar Square meeting, a crowd rushed towards Regent Street, breaking a few windows in the shops, and compelling the smart ladies to alight from their carriages.

Contrary to what is currently said about the British workers, they received with eagerness, all over the country, the teachings of Socialism. Their only doubts were as to how to organise production when it would be wrested from the hands of the capitalists. State ownership of factories, mines, and so on, which the Marxist Social Democrats began to preach, did not appeal to the British workers as it appealed to the Germans. Benevolent Cæsarism, State capitalism, State ownership of industries, and paternal Government Socialism, such as was patronised by Tory Democrats, did not find much response with the British working men, who had been educated in the ideas of Robert Owen and his followers; and they eagerly looked for some such solution of the social question as would tend to transmit the socialised instruments of production into the hands of the organised working men themselves. Even till now this idea is still alive with them, and this makes the

weakness of Social Democracy and the intellectual force of Anarchism in England.

Those of us who, on our lecturing tours, came into close contact with the working men masses in the provinces, felt strongly the existence of such a need, and *Freedom* did its best to answer to it. Unfortunately, in the whole English Socialist movement of those years there was no one who was sufficiently familiar with the immense English Socialist literature of the Owenite times, so as to bring the teachings of the modern Socialists into direct connection with the ideas advocated by Godwin, Robert Owen, and later on by British Socialists and Anarchists in the thirties and the forties. This was especially regrettable in our case, as it would have been so easy to show the relation of our Anarchist Communism with the ideas of our British forefathers, and to resume their traditions, especially in all matters concerning the land question and agriculture.

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The movement had already divided by that time into three main sections: the Social Democratic Federation, the Socialist League, and the Fabians. But the Social Democratic Federation, up to 1889, remained a revolutionary body. It organised large popular demonstrations which found a wide response in the poorest masses. All the language of its speakers was revolutionary; and when Hyndman once asked me what I thought of the Federation, I could but answer him: "Very good! because—mark it—you are yet scores of miles away from Parliament; but the day that you shall approach it within a measurable distance, that day your party will become as anxious for the revolutionary movement, and as insignificant for Socialism, as German Social Democracy already is."

However, at that time the British Social Democrats took a revolutionary attitude, and in 1887, when we held meetings in favour of our condemned Chicago Anarchist brothers, the Social Democratic speakers by our side used the same language as we did. They did the same at our Commune celebrations, which brought us all together—they were miles away then from Parliament.

The change came in 1889 and in 1890. A striking and a sudden change.

After some preparatory work, accomplished chiefly by Socialists, amongst the dock labourers of London, and by several Irishmen amongst the dockers of Scotland, there broke out the great strike in the London docks.

The strike was a wonderful lesson in many respects. It demonstrated to us the practical possibility of a General Strike. Once the life of the Port of London had been paralysed, the strike spread wider and wider, bringing all sorts of industries to a standstill, and threatening to paralyse the whole life of the five millions of Londoners.

Another lesson of this strike was—in showing the powers of the working men for organising the supply and distribution of food for a large population of strikers. The demonstration was quite conclusive.

But a third lesson, too, was deducted from the Dockers' Strike by the Labour and Socialist politicians. Some of the Socialists, especially Burns and Tillett, were brought by it into prominence, and Burns could reckon with certainty upon being elected to Parliament at the next election in his constituency of Battersea—with the support, of course, of the Liberal middle classes, who at once appreciated his organising capacities, his "love of order," and especially his "moderation." Burns prepared then for his election.

This was the beginning of the decay of the whole Socialist movement in this country. The candidature of Burns provoked the first real split in the Social Democratic Federation, soon followed by other splits,—and the whole tone of the movement suddenly went down. Petty electoral considerations took the place of the outspoken revolutionary language of the previous years. To preach revolution became a crime. To

speak of Socialism pure and simple was to indulge in Utopias. A reduction of the hours of labour and "Labour legislation" became quite sufficient topics of discussion. Social Democracy—that is, a compromise with the middle classes for sharing political power with them in a middle-class State—took the place of Socialism.

In the meantime the middle classes rallied. When the first fears inspired in them by the Labour movement were over, they perceived the weak point of its armour. It was Parliamentarism. And into that weak point of the armour they thrust their poisoned weapon.

They went on saying to the workers: "What, are you talking of revolution! Leave that to the hungry Frenchies! How could we live, thirty millions of us, on the produce of our small islands? We have something better than that to do: we have to achieve the industrial and capitalistic conquest of the world!—See, we gave a mere trifle of money as a loan to Egypt, and now all the country is ours!—See, the millions we get therefrom in the shape of interest for moneys which we never lent otherwise than in the shape of imaginary transfers on paper in our banks! And you, fools, talk of a revolution! Go to Egypt as our functionaries, save there—and we shall see we get an equally profitable use for your savings. Come to help us in the conquest of new countries in Africa and Asia. Send a few of your's to share with us the government of the masses." And they consolidated in the meantime under the name of a Unionist Party, their Imperialist battalions, and spent extravagant sums of money in fostering Imperialism by every possible means. And they succeeded in thus bribing the better-to-do portion of the working men.

The first symptoms of the coming change were seen at the famous demonstration of 1890, when the poorest masses of the East End marched to the West End, to show their poverty and to demonstrate and muster their forces. It was the Trade Unionists who undertook to marshal that demonstration and to maintain "order." And one could see then, how, immediately after that demonstration, which separated the "moderate" and better-off Trade Unionists from the poorer masses, the whole Socialist movement felt the effect of cold water thrown upon it. *Freedom* at that time recognised perfectly well these facts and their result.

And when, in the year 1890, the First of May movement reached this country, and the workers rushed in their hundreds of thousands to the First of May demonstration, with the hope of bringing out in this way a General Strike and obtaining a great victory, cold water was again thrown on their enthusiasm by their leaders, who came to say: "No General Strike! A General Strike is general nonsense! Send us to Parliament, and we shall get you in due time the *Legal Eight Hours!*" *Freedom* fiercely combatted that policy; but the force was theirs; they won the day—and they buried the Eight Hour movement.

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Then came the disturbed years of 1890-1895. The furious prosecutions directed against the Anarchists in France and Spain brought about retaliation. The most violent means had to be resorted to, by the Anarchists in order to conquer the very right to live and to work, without being hunted down by the police from spot to spot like so many outlaws.

In this country the struggle never attained the violence it had attained in France and Spain. But even here we have had—in 1892-94—the abominable condemnation of the Walsall comrades for a plot hatched by the Scotland Yard agents, the prosecution of the *Commonweal* in 1892, the prosecution of our friend Cantwell for an open-air speech, and so on.

The ferocious prosecutions which were now started in all countries against the Anarchists had necessarily the effect of thinning our ranks. Most of the middle-class people who formerly sympathised with Anarchism turned the cold shoulder to us now; the timid withdrew. Abominable exceptional laws were passed against the Anarchists on the Continent, and several advanced papers ceased to appear. In this country, *Commonweal*, which had lately become an Anarchist paper, had to stop its publication. *Freedom* had also to stop in January, 1895, for the next four months. Anarchist propaganda was rendered more and more difficult; and in proportion as the voice of the revolutionary wing of Socialism was less heard, the politician's won ground more and more.

However, at that very same time the leading ideas of Anarchism, becoming better known in a wider public, decidedly won sympathies in wide circles of thinking men; some of the greatest writers of our own time openly expressed themselves in favour of Anarchism. And while the middle-class sympathisers, frightened by violence, left our ranks, much sympathy

was won for our ideas amidst the working classes, even though most of the sympathisers did not dare openly to show their inclination, still less to join the circles, whose activities were more and more hampered by prosecutions and police interference.

It is interesting to note that about the same time as these ferocious prosecutions of the Anarchists took place a new element was introduced into the Anarchist propaganda, viz., propaganda work in the Labour organisations—the Syndicates—especially in France, and a wide propaganda of the *General Strike* as well as of *direct action of the workers against their exploiters*.

Revolutionary Anarchist Communist propaganda within the Labour Unions had always been a favourite mode of action in the Federalist or "Bakunist" section of the International Working Men's Association. In Spain and in Italy it had been especially successful. Now it was resorted to, with evident success, in France, and *Freedom* eagerly advocated this sort of propaganda, carefully taking note of its successes all over the world. For this country our paper especially insisted upon what might have been attained by *direct action* in the Eight Hour movement, if the workers decided at a First of May demonstration not to work more than eight hours from the very next day, and to abandon work about four in the afternoon.

Unfortunately, the Labour movement went in the meantime, both in this country and on the Continent, deeper and deeper into the quagmire of Parliamentarian politics. All the efforts of the Labour leaders were now directed towards gaining seats in Parliament, and to compelling the middle-class Liberals to promise them their support at the next elections.

The result of such a suicidal policy is fresh in the memories of all. For ten years we had a Conservative Government which twice brought the country to the verge of ruinous wars—first with the United States, and next with France—and finally waged a barbarous, unprovoked war against the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. It demolished the work that had been done in the early "seventies" for putting education on a secular basis, and it finally threatened to strike at the very root the efficacy of the Trade Unions, by rendering them responsible for the losses sustained by the employers in consequence of strikes. That Government was overthrown at last, at the very moment when it was going to throw the country into a war with Germany, as recklessly engaged in as it had begun the war in Africa. And what was most significant—it was overthrown owing to a combined effort of the working classes, who seem to have realised at last how foolish they had been when they played into the hands of the Tory Imperialists at the two previous elections.

It is self-evident that the conditions which we have briefly described were not favourable for the creation in this country of an Anarchist party. The last twenty-one years were years of a general triumph of the middle-class ideals and policy over the Socialist ideals. All that could be done by the Anarchists was consequently to keep high the banner of Anarchism; to spread as widely as possible the ideas of a free, no-government organisation of Communism; and to counterbalance as much as we could the centralistic, bureaucratic ambitions of Social Democracy.

In this respect *Freedom* has undoubtedly accomplished a task which will live. It has helped to shatter these ideas, and it has done something towards keeping alive amidst the British workers those ideas of Free Communism of which the foundations had been laid by our forefathers in the very heart of the nation.

And we may be certain now, that when a new revival of Socialist agitation comes, as it came in 1884-86, it will bear the seeds of Communism as against Collectivism, and of Anarchism as against State Socialism.

P. KROPOTKIN.

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND LABOUR MOVEMENTS.

By Dr. T. F. MACDONALD.

The Labour movement in Australasia is extremely complex, and very much confusion of ideas concerning it obtains not only in other countries, but also in Australasia itself.

One reason for this is that a new factor or element, at any rate, one not met with in Europe, enters into Labour questions in the Antipodes, viz., the element of cheap, coloured, absolutely servile alien labour, imported almost at will by the employing classes, monopolies, trusts, whenever in the opinion of those dominating classes the workers of Australasia are making too much ground. From the fact that plenty of cheap, "reliable" labour is to be obtained within

a few days' sail of Australia; a sombre cloud hangs continually over the Labour movement, threatening to pour forth a flood of blacklegging elements which might at any moment swamp not only Unionist labour, but the entire working class. Such a calamity really happened in Queensland, where for some thirty years the work in tropical agriculture fell entirely into the hands of alien cheap workers, who were in reality slaves, having neither social privileges extended to them, nor could they in their helpless ignorance form even the simplest institution of self-defence.

In the mines, again, Chinese labour had to be opposed; in the pearl fisheries, the Japanese. In fact, with the presence of Japanese, Chinese, Javanese, Hindoos, Cingalese, and other Eastern peoples, the workers of Australia have had an extremely uphill battle to fight.

However, the coloured labour question must be reserved for future articles; at present it is enough to know that in fighting this, to it, hydra-headed enemy, Australasian Labour consolidated its ranks, and grew extremely powerful.

Here, perhaps, it were useful to mention that the general public of Australasia learned for the first time that Labour fought not only its own battle, but that of the whole country; and a deep moral sympathy gradually grew towards the workers; which fact to some extent explains the widespread popularity of the Australasian movement, a popularity which gave to Australia for the first time in history a Labour Parliament, headed by a Labour Prime Minister.

Prior to the great historical maritime strike of 1890 in Australasia there had grown up a magnificent movement of Trade and Labour federation. Australian and New Zealand federations were further united in strong bonds of solidarity. At the call of Australia, New Zealand joined the great strike of 1890, with results well known to those who interest themselves in other than their own national movement. The great strike failed in its main purpose, but the Labour movement of Australasia was not, therefore, beaten; it was only checked. However, the blow was such as to divide Australia and New Zealand into separate movements, and from that time to the present they have continued to develop irrespective of each other, thus the Australasian Labour movement presents two distinct phases which must be followed separately.

At once it may be said that Australia developed rapidly in the direction of theoretical State Socialism, being influenced by the theories imported by such men as H. H. Champion, at one time rather famous in the English movement.

Theories of Socialism flooded Australia in every State. Nationalisation of the land became the chief plank in all Labour political movements, which unfortunately became the vogue, as Labour leaders rushed to conclusions far too readily. They wrongly judged that because of the failure of the Labour movement during the great strike, politics must provide salvation for the workers weary of exploitation.

Had they analysed the situation closely at that time, they must have found by reason, what they are now beginning to feel by experience, that the great strike failed from insufficient economic forces, from the now obvious truth that Capital is an international enemy of the workers, and can only be fought by international weapons. These can never be political, but must be, and shall be, forged from an international understanding between the Labour Unions and Federations of all nations.

However, Australia took up the political Labour movement with marked enthusiasm.

All, apparently, went well; and the hopes of the workers rose as political majorities piled up in every Australian State in favour of Labour platforms.

At last came the crowning political success of Australia: in the Commonwealth Parliament they found themselves in power. Surely the workers would now reap the reward of all their hard work at the polls. Measures in keeping with platform pledges would surely soon make their appearance. The land would be nationalised, also the means of production, distribution, and exchange! No! On the contrary, the platform was top-heavy; some planks must go. And the very first to be thrown into the "objective" was, yes, nationalisation of land!

The Labour Party in power found, as other political parties before them, that Australian land did not belong to Australians, but to English bondholders! How could it, then, be nationalised, when to expropriate would mean war with England, backed up by Germany, France, Holland, and all the money-lending countries of the world?

Explain it as we may, the historical fact remains that when the Commonwealth Labour Party came before their respective constituencies for the second time, the land nationalisation plank had vanished from the Labour platform.

The lesson and moral is this: that when political parties find their limits, which they quickly do, ideals are ignored; and the Labour ship must be trimmed to the strongest political wind that blows.

However successful the political side of the Australian movement may be in the Australian national sense, when confronted with international forces, an inevitable corollary to national success, it breaks down completely.

The loss of time engendered by false moves like this is only a trifle of the evil wrought by the Australian political Labour movement. Trusting to the shadowy hopes raised by political success, as far as gaining seats in Parliament can be called success, a most fatal movement now appeared among the Unions, more especially among those of Queensland. So sure did the workers become of the soundness

of political action that they began to neglect their Trade Unions; and in some cases—Charters Towers, for instance—they abandoned them. In 1905 in Charters Towers, a mining city, out of 3,500 miners only some 300 were organised in societies.

But the penalty followed swift and sure. In that year, for the first time in its political history, a Labour man was defeated in the political contest, to the astonishment of all Australia. It had seemed a moral impossibility to wrest a seat from Labour in this stronghold of Democracy; but here, not once, but twice in succession, the forces of reaction triumphed. Why? The explanation is not far to seek, and again a moral stares one in the face. With no Unions to resist the subtle application of economic pressure on the part of mine owners, workers found themselves sacked or coerced with impunity, and hopelessly beaten in the political struggle as a consequence of direct intimidation.

The moral is: a political movement must ever prove to be an impossibility without support from flourishing economic organisations. It is something to know that State Socialists in Australia are very much alive to this interesting and all-important truth. A little more experience and knowledge will convince them that political action is a positive drag upon labour evolution in any country.

Australia, we have seen, developed more particularly on the theoretical side as a result of the defeat in 1890. New Zealand went in quite the opposite direction.

The solidarity of the workers, during the great strike in its New Zealand aspect, as described by those who participated in it, must have been something sublime. "Unshakable as rock, and deep as the sea, and quivering with emotion," were the words of one who weathered the terrible struggle.

Was the strike a failure in New Zealand? If to shake the country to its foundations, and without returning a single Labour man to Parliament to so impress the Government with possibilities and probabilities that it set to work immediately to initiate relief works, a Labour Bureau, humanitarian legislation almost by the square yard; so much so as to earn for themselves the world-wide reputation of being Socialists—if all this means failure, then the strike failed. But no! The proud position New Zealand holds as a pioneer in Humanism to-day is due to the glorious solidarity of the workers during the famous strike of some seventeen years ago.

This last fact is not sufficiently appreciated either by the New Zealand workers or by those students of sociology who visit New Zealand to study the so-called Socialistic laws of that country.

New Zealand, then, won all its advanced Labour laws without the assistance of a distinct Labour Party in Parliament, but by modification of Liberal platforms induced by the influence of public opinion, which was skilfully judged by the late R. G. Seddon, for thirteen years Premier.

By far the most interesting items in the whole field of Australasian legislation are the Wages Boards system of Victoria, and the Arbitration and Conciliation laws of New Zealand.

Wages Boards are thought by Victorian employers to provide the best solution to Labour problems. This is in itself a suspicious circumstance. If the employers praise an institution created to settle disputes with their employees, one may be sure there is something advantageous to themselves in the arrangement. So it happens with Wages Boards. Without going into detail, suffice it at present to say that the chronic action of Wages Boards is to destroy Trade Unions.

The workers, instead of looking to their Unions for help in times of trouble, look directly to the Board, and consequently they find no real use for their Unions and begin to abandon them. This phase of Union decadence would soon kill the whole movement in Victoria, were it not for the tremendous vigour thrown into it by Union enthusiasts who appreciate the dangers and take active measures to guard against them.

Arbitration laws act much in the same way. Thirteen years' experience has convinced the New Zealand workers that arbitration by compulsion has rivetted, as it were, the wages and salaries system firmly into their lives. They have found that wages can be maintained by legislation, but that prices and rents are uncontrolled thereby, and thus the actual position of the working family is scarcely benefited by increased wages. Now they cry aloud for the total abolition of the wages and salaries system, which they know cannot be done by Arbitration Courts unless those Courts include a system of profit-sharing in their jurisdiction, which they will never do without severe pressure from the economic field.

To strike in New Zealand is in reality to revolt, and this means a very serious outlook for the next year or two in that country. Dissatisfied as the workers are with the present condition of affairs, knowing that they can get no satisfaction from the Labour Courts, and not being allowed by law to strike, they feel in a trapped condition. Twice or thrice they have kicked over the traces and actually revolted, thoroughly sick of dangling after Court decisions which might be given six months after entirely new conditions had arisen and new demands were necessary. Sure enough, the workers in New Zealand have become immune to Arbitration and Conciliation Boards, and the next step brings them face to face with the general plan of campaign of Anarchist Communism, viz., Federation of Unions, with international understanding of Federations as the basic lines of associations embracing all wage and salaried people, who are common slaves of the one international enemy—Capitalism.

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NOTES.

A DIVIDING GULF.

An interesting discussion has arisen in the *Clarion*, on the question of the efficiency of politics, or rather of the Labour Party in Parliament, in helping, one will not say Socialism, but the improvement of the condition of the workers. Blatchford says, truly enough, that so far the Labour Party is a failure, even from their own point of view, and that, stupid as they are in the dirty work of politics, Socialism—*real* Socialism—is forgotten or ignored. But it must be perfectly clear to those who understand what Socialism used to mean that since the days when Sir William Harcourt could say "We are all Socialists now," the word has lost its real meaning. That is why we see every day people parading up and down this benighted island, calling themselves Socialists, getting themselves nominated for Parliamentary elections, and occasionally being pitchforked into the den of thieves, who have no more comprehension of Socialism or sincere desire for its realisation than the Brummagen idol of Birmingham, who years ago talked of "ransom."

Blatchford is justly indignant at all this, and is perfectly correct when he says the ruling classes "will attack Socialism in the name of God and the chastity of the English home"; so that to compromise, as all these trimmers do, with the Christian humbugs and the "moral" hypocrites who abound in "Merrie England" is in reality to give up the fight for Socialism. But we are quite sure that Blatchford can never bridge the gulf that exists between those who strive for the "ideal"—the Free Commune—and those Socialists (?)—mere reformers—who destroy the hopes of the workers by peddling with wretched palliatives.

MILITARISM AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY.

Social Democracy is showing its hand very clearly in its attitude towards the anti-militarist propaganda. In Germany it is reactionary, in France it is reactionary, and in England, as far as it exists at all, it takes the same line, with its cranky advocacy of a citizen army. In this respect these mockers of the red flag go arm in arm with "Bobs the burner." Now the workers should understand once for all that Social Democracy in its fundamental conceptions is militarism writ large. For what, after all, are their proposals? The organisation of an industrial army for production and exchange, and of a citizen army for national defence. The industrial army will be remunerated by a splendid adjustment of the wage system as opposed to Communism, and the citizen army will entail compulsory service on all able-bodied members of the community—or rather the State. For that is what we shall have: the State, with its hosts of functionaries, its big pots and its little pots, and its never-ending officialism and petty tyrannies. This is no exaggeration. Organisation must either be compulsory or free. If compulsory, you have the military spirit with all its attendant evils; if free, you have the Anarchist spirit with all the advantages that arise when the fetters that hinder individual initiative and development are removed.

THE HOME OF THE BLACKLEG.

Our French comrades are asking how it is that in England, where Trade Unionism is such a power, where its forces are so admirably organised by a "practical" people, and its funds attain such enormous proportions, the blackleg is becoming such a danger to the Labour movement. The few protests that have

been uttered by Labour men have been quite ineffective in staying the flow of these wretched enemies of their own class to fill the places of the strikers in other lands. Is this apathy also to be attributed to the fact that political action is sapping all the manhood of this generation? However that may be, the disgrace is ours and will eventually recoil on our own heads. If we have any shame left, we should feel a double humiliation at the fact that from Havre, where an effort was made to secure blackleg labour, not one worker could be induced to betray the solidarity of his class. But then in France the influence of Direct Action is moralising the Labour movement, whereas in England—well, the least said about us the better.

A Short History of "Freedom."

When, in 1886, a few comrades felt the necessity of a paper advocating Anarchist Communist ideas, there was then no publication in England to voice these views, Seymour's *Anarchist* being avowedly Individualist. So in October, 1886, the first number of *Freedom* was published.

The Anarchist trial at Lyons in 1883, the articles by Mrs. Wilson in *Justice* in 1884, as well as the Fabian tract by the same writer, "Social Democracy and Anarchism," (the first publication of the kind since the Anarchist Communist teachings of Godwin in the first edition of his "Political Justice"), had awakened much interest in Anarchist Communist teachings. As a result, the appearance of the paper met then with more sympathy, even amongst the middle classes, than would be found to-day; while it must be said that from the very first a few comrades amongst the workers—a very few, but very sincere—accepted wholeheartedly the new ideas, and remained true to them all through.

In the Socialist League some were Anarchists from the beginning—1885—Joseph Lane and Samuel Mailwaring before all. Lane published his "Anti-Statist Communist Manifesto" in 1887. The Avelings (Bloomsbury branch), Bax (Croydon), with Donald and others endeavoured to introduce Parliamentarism in the League, which led to a closer study of that subject by the real Socialists and Revolutionists of the League, and their theoretical evolution towards Anarchism was greatly advanced by their reading *Freedom*, which in the beginning contained a series of articles by Kropotkin, discussing in a certain continuity the various parts of our ideas.

In 1888 the lectures given by Mrs. Wilson, Kropotkin, and others in the League offices at Farringdon Road, and the *Freedom* lectures in a hall at Old Street, etc., later on, started most interesting discussions.

Of course, the death of the Chicago Anarchists (November, 1887), their speeches, Parsons's books, also led many to study Anarchism and to see the abyss between Anarchists and Labour politicians (Socialist or Radical). The unemployed, the Trafalgar Square demonstrations (November, 1887)—all this showed the insufficiency of reforms, of legislation, of alleged political freedom, etc.

The movement had good prospects until 1889, the time of the great Dock Strike. At that moment, the strikes of sympathy were discouraged by the politicians, and the unexpected Australian money gave them an easy victory which they never earned. The downfall of the popular movement began. The politicians saw that there was money and political advancement to be won out of the unskilled workers, and Revolutionary Socialism and Anarchism were not sufficiently strong at that time to resist them efficiently. The efforts of the *Freedom* Group were at that time almost entirely spent in explaining Anarchism to Revolutionary Socialists or discussing with Social Democrats, and they were hardly known outside these circles.

Again, William Morris could not take the decisive step of really examining Anarchism, and many Revolutionary Socialists followed him and later on more or less accepted Parliamentarism again. This paralysed the efforts of the Socialist League.

—Then Anarchists in France and Spain, goaded by endless persecutions, accepted to a large extent the use of very violent methods, which had been considered by many as not applicable to England, where there was full freedom of speech, etc. Some thought different, and this enabled the police to get up the Walsall persecution, the *Commonweal* persecution (both in 1892), the Cantwell persecution (1894), and many, many acts of infamous annoyance against Anarchists to whom they could do nothing worse.

All this led to a certain isolation of Anarchists from the rest of Socialists in the early "nineties." Many of these Socialists

became simply Labour politicians, and attained their ends by the electoral victories of 1906. Others retired, feeling unable to accept either Anarchism—popularly identified with nothing but random violence—or Social Democracy, the road to Parliament.

Under these extremely difficult circumstances the *Commonweal* succumbed (October 6, 1894, the last number of the second series); the young people of the *Torch*, useful in this interval, also discontinued their work (1896).

Freedom was also suspended in January, 1895, but resumed its work—uninterrupted since—in May of the same year, this time aided by the efforts of some of the remaining comrades of the Socialist League—Cantwell, Presburg, and others. W. Wess, coming from the League, had joined *Freedom* earlier. That was the year (1895) when modern Syndicalism was first discussed, and found a strong, though not an exclusive, advocate in *Freedom*.

The Congress of 1896, the efforts to unite the anti-Parliamentarian movements of various countries, the Anarchist Conferences in St. Martin's Hall—this was a period of success when the rewards of previous efforts were reaped, and it was seen that more of the seed of ten years' work had grown than many expected.

Since 1897 the history of *Freedom*—if it can be termed such—resolves itself into one long struggle for existence in conditions of almost overwhelming adversity. Reaction on all hands, with that terrible manifestation of the Jingo spirit during the Boer war, rendered it almost impossible that such a "still, small voice" should be heard. And yet during these years the paper held together comrades—mostly working men—who remained true to the propaganda, and continued to sell the paper, and at the same time many thousands of pamphlets, printed by the *Freedom* Group.

The propaganda, indeed, that has resulted from the spreading of our literature has been the most encouraging outcome of the life of the paper; and the organisation of this all-important branch of activity was never on such an excellent basis.

Perhaps this brief account should hardly be called history. History, after all, is mostly a record of quarrels, ambitions, scandals, etc., and *Freedom* has remained unstained by these as far as human things could be. Instead of this, it gives an example in voluntary effort which may perhaps encourage others. No capitalist advertisements have ever been sought; instead of such "support" it has had only such voluntary help as sympathisers could give; and the editing and writing of the paper have been a labour of love for twenty-one years.

Samuel Mainwaring.

Born December 14, 1841. Died September 29, 1907.

By the death of our old and trusty comrade, Sam Mainwaring, which we have to announce with deep regret, one of the few remaining links with the old Socialist League is gone.

The years when his best work was done in the Revolutionary Socialist movement were the years when that movement was a real force amongst the workers. In those strenuous days few of the comrades showed a finer fighting spirit than Sam Mainwaring. His intense hatred of conventional lies and formalities; his detestation of the backstairs methods of officialism, which often brought him into conflict with those in his Union; his uncompromising attitude towards the political self-seekers who were deserting the true cause to serve their own ends; all these abuses were attacked with an energy born of a genuine spirit and backed by a splendid physique.

It was, indeed, to an outburst of this spirit, which impelled him to speak on Parliament Hill on Sunday, September 29, that we owe his sudden and tragic death. The old fire burst forth once more, and in the excitement of this effort the heart failed, and he fell dead as he spoke his last words in the good cause.

We must not conclude this brief and inadequate notice of his work without mentioning his plucky attempt to publish a paper, the *General Strike*, in the winter of 1903, only two numbers of which appeared. Ardent Trade Unionist as he was, he knew from experience how the canker of leadership and officialism so continually mars the good work Unions might accomplish. He hoped to arouse his fellow workers to the need of the General Strike, and to remind them ever and always to watch their leaders. But they in their apathy gave him little support. Time will prove, however, he was right in giving this last message to the workers, and some already realise it.

He was buried at Finchley on October 4.

The Amsterdam Congress.

The following report is made from notes taken at the Congress. It does not pretend to be verbatim, but simply to give the gist of what was said, and as much as possible in the actual words of the speakers. In the absence of any stenographic report, it will be the most extensive that can appear. Any corrections or supplementary matter will be welcome, as a reprint in pamphlet form might be considered later.—K. W.

The Congress opened on Monday morning, August 26, 1907, present about a hundred, including eighty delegates, FUSC-AMORE presiding. Several suggestions were at once put forward for the identification of those present, FRIEDEBERG proposing a list of groups represented, and NACHT the identification of individuals by mutual acquaintance at the tables. The latter was adopted and carried out. Discussion of the agenda was then taken, it having been proposed by several comrades that the item "Anti-Militarism" be struck off because the Anti-Militarist Congress was announced for Friday of that week. Some were for inviting the Anti-Militarist Congress to join the Anarchist Congress for the discussion of this important matter, others for taking it immediately, others again for adjourning while the other Congress was sitting in order that all might attend. The sitting was suspended for ten minutes, after which it was agreed to make clear the Anarchist views of Anti-militarism on the Friday morning, and then to adjourn for the Anti-Militarist Congress.

Reports of delegates were then called for.

THONAR, for Belgium, described the movement in that country as awakening to a new activity in sympathy with the rousing of the masses. The groups were not actually federated, but it had been found necessary to form a central fund for building up a circulating library and a large stock of literature. This was carried about the country, and pamphlets sold broadcast. The central fund was also used for the important work of helping deserters.

VOHRZEK, for Bohemia, reported that the movement had been in existence many years, and that four years ago organisation had been found necessary. The groups at present numbered about forty-two; they supported eight newspapers, one of which had a circulation of 12,000, and they had also published fifty to sixty pamphlets. The most important work at that time was among the peasants, to whom they were preaching Syndicalism* as a means of emancipation. Anarchism was very wide spread in the workers' Syndicates; in fact, the two most important Syndicates in the country, the Miners' and the Weavers', had an Anarchist majority, and were conducted on Anarchist principles—that is, by voluntary subscriptions.

SAMSON, for the Dutch Federation of Anarchist Communist groups, gave a list of many pamphlets published by them, and of six newspapers with an average circulation of over 1,000. Besides these there were six other more or less revolutionary organs in the country, one published by Domela Nieuwenhuis, one Humanitarian Anarchist, one Anti-militarist, one Syndicalist, one Christian Anarchist, and one for Land Nationalisation through Direct Action. They found that the best means of propaganda in the towns was to take a stall in the market and sell literature like vegetables.

A Dutch comrade, who rose to supplement this report, declared that there were seventy-two groups in Holland not included in the Federation. He also maintained that the Federation only supported one out of the six papers, the other five being run by non-federated groups.

DUNOIS, on behalf of the comrades of French-Switzerland, described the movement as unorganised in that country up to 1906, when a Congress was called which resulted in the formation of the present Anarchist Communist Federation. Every group has a secretary, whose business is entirely correspondence, and who is constantly in touch with the same (and the only) "officer" of the Federation. The Swiss Anarchists are finding their chief sphere of action in the Syndicates. They were influential in the great strike of the chocolate workers, which, beginning as a sectional strike on behalf of one man, developed into a general strike of such importance that the police and the army were useless, and the Government finally had to beg the capitalists to give in. The comrades enter the Syndicates in order to bring on such strikes and to push them towards expropriation, and at the same time they organise among themselves for the success of revolution.

BAGINSKY, for the foreign movement in the United States, began by remarking that an Anarchist Congress in that country, the politically freest country in the world, would now be impossible. The movement may be said to date from the Congress held in 1884, although for some time it was purely intellectual and middle-class. The condition of the proletariat was scarcely considered. Attention was called to the discontent and unrest among them by the action of Czolgosz. He was absolutely unknown to Anarchists, yet their attempt to discuss his action, without praising it or blaming it, was used against individuals and the movement. The organ of the movement, *Freiheit*, was carried on by German comrades when Most died, and has at present a circulation varying from 3,500 to 4,000. The main lines of propaganda are Syndicalism and the General Strike.

EMMA GOLDMAN, for the American movement, brought a long account of the situation in the United States, which she thought

* This expression is used throughout as being less cumbersome than "Revolutionary Trade Unionism."

advisable not to read as so much time had been taken up with reports. (This paper is now being printed in *Mother Earth*.) She described how in her three journeys across the American Continent, visiting twenty-eight States, she found Anarchist groups all over the country, speaking every language from Dutch to Japanese. But the purely American movement is very young in spite of the strong foreign movement in its midst, the Yiddish comrades, for example, who recently started a daily paper. More than anything else the famous Haywood trial has stimulated the purely American movement, and helped to bring the middle-class Tolstoyans into touch with the brute facts of the social conditions. Besides *Mother Earth*, with a monthly circulation of 3,000 to 4,000, there is the *Demonstrator*, published by the Home Colony, and *Liberty*, which is still devoted to the individualist side of Anarchism. As to the fighting organisations of the proletariat, their hope in the Workers' Federation is dead. It is now from the Western Miners' Union that the beginning of a revolutionary movement may be expected. The East is absorbed in commercial and political greed, but the essential characteristic of the West is its revolutionary spirit. Touching on the difficulties of Anarchist propaganda in the East, she instanced the Criminal Anarchy Law of New York, under which any person preaching Anarchism is liable to imprisonment for ten years and 5,000 dollars (£1,000) fine, and anyone letting or allowing a hall to be used for Anarchist meetings can be sent to prison for two years.

At this point telegrams were read bringing greetings from the Workers' Friend Group and Germinal Group of London, and from groups in Denmark, Westphalia, Geneva, Italy, and Portugal.

RAMUS then gave a report on the Austrian movement, covering the period from 1894 until to-day. The movement suffered severely for some time from the crushing severity of the police, and from the malicious denunciations of the Social Democrats. Anarchists were imprisoned and expelled for the most absurd trifles, and the opposition sections and tendencies which arose within and separated themselves from the ranks of Social Democracy had nothing of Anarchism in them, but competed with the official party for the conquest of power over the workers. So it came about that during the period 1899-1904 there was practically no Anarchist movement among the German Austrians. Since then there has been a distinct revival, and especially during the past year, which has seen the formation of numerous groups. These young groups are just about to publish their own German Anarchist weekly.

LANGE, for Germany, described the movement as federalist, the only way to arouse interest being through the advocacy of such organisation. *Die Revolutionär*, with a circulation of 5,000, and *Der Anarchist*, with 1,800, represented the two lines of propaganda in Germany. But no revolutionary movement could be looked for in that country while the power of the Social Democrats remained what it is. It lies like a dead weight on the people, but there are already plentiful signs of its coming disruption.

ROCKER, for the Jewish movement in England, reported that seven provincial and four London groups took an active part in the life of the Jewish Trade Unions, of which there were eleven, regarding always Syndicalism as a revolutionary means of emancipation. The best known paper, the *Workers' Friend*, had a circulation of 2,500, and had been clearly Anarchist for sixteen years. Another more popular paper was *Germinal*, printed in 48 pages, with 4,000 copies as an average issue. Besides these they trusted a great deal in pamphlets, of which over 30,000 had been sold. Their position was often made difficult by the fact of their being foreigners, and on account of the exaggerated prejudice of the English press and public regarding Anarchism. Nevertheless they had been able to give valuable assistance to Russian comrades, and now they had solved the difficulty of the constant visitations of spies by taking two attached houses on a 21 years' lease, in one of which was a room capable of holding 800 people. The Social Democratic and the Zionist movements are of very little importance among the Jews of England.

WALTER, for the English movement proper, reported on the activity of the *Freedom* group of London, which continued to publish the monthly paper of that name (circulation about 1,500), started 21 years ago. The group had also a good sale of pamphlets, a number being at present in print and others projected. Another group had been formed for the weekly publication of the *Voice of Labour*, circulation about 2,000. The object of this paper was to infuse the Labour movement with the spirit of direct action, and it appealed alike to Unionists and non-Unionists. [Unfortunately, it has since ceased publication owing to lack of support.] There were also several provincial groups who kept up the old traditions of street-corner propaganda, and recently an attempt to organise regional Unions for skilled and unskilled workers had resulted in what practically amounted to an Anarchist Federation of seven or eight groups.

ROGDAEFF, for Russia, explained that the movement only became visible in that country five years ago, groups in Odessa and Bielostock being among the first, together with that of Ekaterinoslav, now one of the strongest. There were the widest differences and tendencies with regard to tactics, the Ural Congress, for instance, admitting Syndicalism, while the Polish movement was all for secrecy. Taking the country as a whole, the secret organisations are by far the strongest. Then there are groups formed for special purposes, for agitation against taxes or against the Army. The Baltic provinces are particularly strong in anti-militarist groups. There is also a strong organisation for propaganda in the Navy. All of these are well supplied with

literature that includes translations of all the best foreign writers. But the Syndicalist or non-secret activities in the towns have been and are very important. In St. Petersburg and Moscow there are Unions of unemployed, who force the Government to give them work, and attack the shops if this is not forthcoming; and at such times there is, of course, an intense propaganda of wholesale expropriation. In the country also this principle is at work; in Georgia, for instance, where the village of Goulgouly became purely Communist and remained so for ninety days.

MUNTZICH described how the work of the Proudhonists and Bakuninists in Serbia and Bulgaria was choked by the advent of Marxism after the Turco-Russian War. Newspapers have been started in both countries, and in spite of their short lives they will shortly reappear, for the movement is distinctly increasing. Also in Dalmatia there is an Anarchist movement of great promise.

MALATESTA declared that Socialism in Italy was born Anarchist. The number of Anarchists in some districts is surprising. In Ancona and Massa Carrara the majority of inhabitants may safely be said to be Anarchists, and this year has seen a great reaction against the Social Democracy of the Socialist Party, which reaction has created a new Syndicalist movement, in which Anarchists are taking part, and which is in many respects Anarchistic.

The French report was held over for the following day, as it dealt mainly with the question of organisation. It was agreed that no more reports should be taken owing to the amount of time necessitated by the translations.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 27TH. SECOND DAY.

LANGE presiding.

"Anarchism and Organisation."

DUNOIS (France).—The question of organisation comes first on our agenda owing to the pressing necessity of an international understanding among Anarchists. A great change has taken place in the movement during the last decade. Before that period individual action was considered sufficient in itself to bring about the emancipation of the people; but this idea has faded as the movement has come into closer touch with the workers. It was for want of this intimate contact that the early Anarchist groups, really no more than groups for social study, became merely idealistic. The two main causes of this change in France have been the example of foreign countries and the "affaire Dreyfus." The result of the first was Syndicalism, of the second Anti-militarism. At the same time, and by these means, Anarchism has become a practical revolutionary theory based on the spontaneous action of the workers. It is true that there are still a few Individualists in the country who swear by Rousseau that every possible form of society is bad. But Anarchism insists on the organisation of society, organisation *minus* authority. Even Marx defined it so, looking forward to the transformation of government into administration. For Anarchism is not simply Individualist; it is essentially Federalist. It has been said that there lies a danger to the movement in Syndicalism. We acknowledge it is so for those who feel it so; but for most of us this danger is more than compensated by the new world it opens to Anarchist activities, and by the sight of a new basis of society. We must see to it that this new basis is Anarchist. We must not remain together, "initiates." Everywhere we see the corporative conception of the mass movement giving way to the class conception. But that is not enough; we must supply the means and the object to the energised proletariat. And compare our position with that of the Social Democrats. They receive inspiration for action in the Syndicates from their party, they feel the strength of their party behind them, something to refer to as a common ground of inspiration. In the same way we should gain by federation. Besides helping each other and keeping the revolutionary spirit alive and earnest, we have to remember that there can be no revolution without the mass of the people. Propaganda must still be our first object, and for this we need federation of all who agree in principles and methods. His motion read:—

"The Anarchists assembled in Congress at Amsterdam,

Considering that the ideas of Anarchism and of organisation, far from being incompatible, as has often been supposed, complete and explain each other, the whole principle of Anarchism being the free organisation of productive workers;

That individual action (important as it is, and at certain moments and in certain countries even of greater importance than collective action) cannot fill the want of collective action, of united movement;

That the organisation of the militant forces would give new life to the propaganda, and would help forward the penetration into the working classes of the ideas of revolutionary federalism;

That organisation founded on identity of interests does not exclude organisation founded on identity of aspirations and ideas; and

That, without establishing between them any useless, nay, possibly harmful connection, they have both a specific activity and a well-defined different but complementary object;

Recommend the comrades in all countries to put on their agenda the formation of Anarchist groups and federation of groups."

EMMA GOLDMAN (America).—We are often accused of a desire to annihilate society, we are constantly called the enemies of organised society, and there have been some who, calling themselves Anarchists, have put forward an ideal of society without organisation. But this merely destructive conception of Anarchism rests on the fallacy of

considering present society as organised. That is not so. The *State* is not a social organisation; it is an organisation born of despotism and maintained by force, and imposed by force on the masses. *Industry* is not organised for the sake of industry, it is simply an exploiting organisation, exploitation being the basis of profit. The *Army* is not a social organisation; it is a cruel instrument of blind force. The *Schools* are not organised for education, but everywhere they are still barracks wherein to drill the human mind into submission to social and moral spooks, and so facilitate the perpetuation of the present system of exploitation. For us, organisation is a natural organic growth, and the test of such organisation must be that it shall increase and liberate our own individuality, the very contrary of all the so-called organisation of to-day. Certainly we do not want such an organisation of non-entities, but an organisation of self-conscious individualities.

Before the morning sitting was closed, THONAR (Belgium), on a point of order, wished to observe that although this was an Anarchist Congress, we had voted [on the order of the day]. This was surely most unreasonable.

MALATESTA (Italy) requested that this matter be at once taken into consideration as bearing directly on the question of organisation.

MONATTE (France) insisted on the difference between Parliamentary voting and free voting. The one was an expression of power, the other of opinion.

CORNELISSEN (Holland) thought it was obvious that any voting in this Congress left the minority absolutely free. It was simply a convenient method of grouping and defining different opinions.

MARMANDE (France) did not wish to take up any theoretical discussion of the point. We want to show each other how we think. If there is a better means of doing so, we shall discover it.

Other speakers having expressed similar opinions, the matter was allowed to drop.

AFTERNOON.

"Anarchism and Organisation" (continued).

CROISSET.—In dealing with this question we have got away from first principles. We must go back to them. Comrade Dunois seemed to forget that the first necessity of Anarchism is individual liberty. However much we may talk about Anarchist Communism—and he (Croisset) was a confirmed Anarchist Communist—we cannot get away from the fact that the principle of life is, "Me first and then the rest." We do not want any hypocritical altruism here. Life is always the individual struggle against necessity, and it is only necessity that forces us to co-operation. Anarchist Communism means the most advantageous compromise between individual freedom and necessary organisation. When any form of organisation or any system of co-operation becomes permanent, it inevitably becomes despotic.

NACHT was not in sympathy with the previous speaker. He was not only in favour of Syndicalism as already defined by others, but also of Anarchist Syndicalism existing alongside the other Syndicalism. He felt that the merely propagandist groups were entirely useless. He should make straight for active expropriation.

THONAR (Belgium).—The Congress itself was a sign of evolution towards organisation of some kind. The necessity of the moment was to unite all over the world so that when anything is to be done we could act together. He declared himself a Syndicalist as well as an Anarchist, in spite of the Syndicates not being Anarchist. And he did this because he recognised that the practical and effective movements of the world are *mass* movements. We, too, must push forward as a *mass* movement.

VORHYZEK (Bohemia) could not see that even extreme Individualism necessitated a denial of organisation. He did not know that the Individualists wrote against organisation—Stirner certainly wrote in favour of it. He held that the popular saying was true in this as in everything else: extremes meet. Obviously we must avoid any form of organisation which might breed authority, but he saw no danger in federation provided that no executive was appointed or allowed to grow up. He would like to insist on the necessity of keeping clearly apart the Anarchist International and the Revolutionary Syndicalist organisations, while at the same time encouraging every form of mutual aid between them. He should like to touch on another point by the way. Possibly the Congress might later on define its opinion of expropriation as it was at present being practised in Russia. He would like to make the personal declaration that however much the individual might be devoted to the cause, he could not consider expropriation for individualist uses a clean method of life.

GOLDMAN (America).—Fifteen years ago there seemed to be an antagonism between Individualism and Communism; now it is impossible to separate them. The liberty of the individual depends on individuality. What we are working towards is a state of society in which social, economic, or sexual subordination will be impossible. She had known Anarchist groups in which objections used to be made to the personal habits of individuals, their manner of dressing or of wearing their hair, or smoking and so forth. This disappears as we learn how to live together and to understand the Communist principle of toleration. As to expropriation, this must be judged entirely according to individual cases. It would be obviously absurd to strike off a member of a group because he had been forced to steal for his immediate needs.

The Congress then adjourned till next morning.

(To be concluded next month.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR COMRADE.—It is good to hear that FREEDOM has reached its twenty-first birthday, and to think that the little paper has continued its steadfast propaganda of Anarchist principles during all that time—a propaganda, indeed, very necessary, though carried on during much of the time in the face of neglect and indifference.

It is good, too, to find that the "coming of age" of the paper coincides with the occurrence of a decided change in general opinion, and with a growing feeling in favour of direct action and voluntarism as opposed to State control. I think myself that the present political movement towards State or municipal organisation of industries is not at all out of place, and indeed is necessary for the time being, in order to rivet and enforce the idea that these industries, etc., must be held and managed for the benefit of the workers and the public, and not for the benefit of a proprietary class. But as this process of official organisation goes on, the attendant evils of bureaucracy and red-tape will become more and more evident, and by the time the lesson of the common life has been learnt, we shall be ready for, and capable of, a free and voluntary organisation.

With hearty greetings and good wishes for the spread of FREEDOM.

EDWARD CARPENTER.

Holmesfield, near Sheffield, September 25, 1907.

[We thank our friend for his good wishes, but we are completely divided on the question of the necessity for State or municipal organisation. We are convinced that the one great mistake that is driving the Labour movement to inevitable disaster is the idea that the State can or will organise industry on lines leading to the workers' economic freedom. The State must always organise as the State, that is, to justify itself as a necessary institution. As this is precisely in the opposite direction to all ideas of freedom, the destruction of the State fetish is the one great need of the hour.]

The clever cartoonist of the *Voice of Labour*, "Sinne," sends the following letter re the suspension of that paper:—

DEAR COMRADE,—

We're not downhearted, are we? We're not dead yet, are we? We're not going to join the I.L.P., are we? The *Voice* will be silent for a time, but it will be heard again. It has been like a red-hot cinder to the movement. The poor little dears have come and looked at it, warmed their hands at it, sniffed at it, cursed at it; but one thing they haven't do was to touch it—it was too hot, it was too honest. How dare you be honest! It's not respectable. How dare you preach Socialism! Socialism now is I.L.P.ism, S.D.F.ism, Shawism.

I suppose you heard about your old friend getting lost on the Welsh mountains; he was looking for the Socialist Party.

Mr. Blatchford is just about entering into his second childhood. Somebody has hit him with a bottle. Bottles, bottles! The poor, half-starved devils have been throwing bottles at soldiers. It's dreadful! We must have a Citizen Army at once! We must tax bottles at once. The Labour Party must bring in a Bill for that purpose.

What we want is a Socialist Party. Of course, it must be a Parliamentary Party; it must be a very respectable Party; but above all, it must be a Socialist Party. None of your common or garden variety of Labour Parties. "G.B.S." will see that everything goes on all right. Politics will be interesting; politics will become like "G.B.S."—funny, damned funny. The House will be amused; everybody in the House will be amused. The poor devils outside the House will have a chilly time. We will invite the landlords and capitalists to commit suicide. We will say to them: "Will you kindly step this way? We have a large tank ready; will you please drown yourselves? We wish to be very considerate; we intend to supply you with plenty of lukewarm water; possibly our esteemed friend Shaw will be able to discover a way of performing the operation without you even getting wet. Great man is Shaw."

Socialism now is sugar-coated, put up in fancy packets with a bit of pink ribbon. The quality is doubtful, but then people are accustomed to having shoddy stuff nowadays. We are living in the shoddy age, therefore we must have a shoddy Socialism.

Meanwhile the Mob keeps moving on, always a-moving on. Where to? Destruction? I don't think so. The Mob moves slowly and surely towards its own destiny—Revolution. The Revolution of the people; the workers' Revolution. Experience, cold-blooded experience, will show the way.

SINNE.

THE "VOICE OF LABOUR."

AN APPEAL.

The *Voice of Labour* Group appeal to comrades and sympathisers for assistance in clearing off the debt of £25 which was owing at the time of the suspension of the paper. The *Voice* did good work in stimulating the movement, as all will agree; therefore the comrades generally should feel it incumbent upon them to help, and not let the burden be borne by a few comrades who have already given freely from their hard-won earnings. Donations should be sent to F. H. Keell, 127 Ossulston Street, N.W., and will be acknowledged in *Freedom*. The following sums for the Guarantee Fund have been received since the last issue of the *Voice*:—

C. H. G. 5s., Sarah 1s., Becky 6d., Essex 2s., R. E. O. 6d., Workers' Friend Group (Montreal) £3 1s. 9d., Herman 3s., J. R. (Bristol) 1s. 6d., B. F. (Glasgow) 2s.

MILITARY HEROISM (!)

It was in 1814; we were about to attack Rheims, which the Emperor wished to recapture. The weather was heavy, with continual rain. One morning the Colonel sent for me. He took me aside whilst the men were cleaning their arms, and said to me in his hoarse old voice:

"You see that barn up there on the hill—up there where that fool of a Russian sentinel with his bishop's hat is promenading?"

"Yes," I answered, "I see distinctly both the grenadier and the barn."

"Very well, at eleven o'clock to-night you will take two hundred of your boys and surprise the defending party in charge of it. But for fear of giving the alarm, you will take the barn by bayonet."

At half-past ten I made my men put their greatcoats over their uniform and hide their rifles under them, because no matter what one does the bayonet almost always shows, and though it was very dark, I mistrusted even the cover of night. I had observed little paths bordered by hedges which led towards the Russian patrol, and up them I led the most determined men I had ever commanded. They were used to Russians and knew how to take them. The sentries we came across during the ascent disappeared noiselessly, like reeds that one lies prone with a hand; but the man guarding the arms required more care. He stood motionless, his chin upon his rifle, balancing himself, poor devil, as if ready to drop asleep with fatigue. One of my grenadiers seized him in his arms as though he would throttle him, and two others having thrust him through with their bayonets, he was flung into the bushes.

I followed slowly, and, honestly, I could not forbear a sense of oppression which I had never experienced in any other combat. It was the shame of attacking men who slept. I saw them, wrapped in their cloaks, lighted by a dim lantern, and my heart was wrung. But all at once, the moment for action having come, I feared it might be but the weakness of a coward who felt fear for the first time, and seizing the sword hidden under my arm, I entered the barn first to give my grenadiers the example.

I made a sign that they understood. They threw themselves first on the piled arms, next, like wolves on a flock, upon the men. Their bayonets pierced, their butt-ends battered, their knees stifled, their hands strangled. Every cry at pains started was smothered beneath the feet of our soldiers, and no sleeping head stirred but it received a mortal blow.

Upon entering, I had struck out fiercely into the vague darkness. An old officer, a tall, strong man, his head crowned with white hair, rose like a phantom, gave a terrible cry on seeing what I had done, struck me a violent blow in the face with his sword, and fell pierced by bayonets. I fell beside him stunned by the blow between my eyes, then under me heard the plaintive dying voice of a child murmuring—"Father . . . !"

I understood then what I had done, and gazed frantically at my handiwork. I saw at my feet one of those boy officers of fourteen, so numerous at that time in the Russian Army, and who were thus taught the horrible trade of war. His curly hair hung over his breast, as soft and golden as a woman's, while his head was turned as though he were about to fall asleep. His rosy lips and great blue eyes were half-open, and as I raised him in my arms his cheek fell against my bloodstained one, as though, a little child again, he strove to bury it in his mother's soft neck for warmth. He seemed to nestle within my arms as if for safety from his murderers. Tender confidence, the repose of an infant's slumber, rested on his dead face.

"And is that an enemy?" I asked myself. I pressed him to my breast, and in doing so discovered that I was pressing the hilt of my own sword, whose first blow that night had transfixed the heart of a sleeping child. I wanted to lay my head on his, to demand forgiveness, but my blood fell fast, staining him with large drops, and I knew it was his father who had repaid my crime. I gazed shame-faced around. It was to see nothing but a pile of corpses that my grenadiers were seizing by the feet and throwing out of the barn, first emptying their pockets.

At that moment the Colonel entered at the head of his column.

"Bravo, my boy!" he cried. "You did that well—but you are wounded?"

"Look at this," said I, "and tell me what difference there is between myself and an assassin."—(From *Grandeurs et Servitudes Militaires*, by Alfred de Vigny, 1797-1863.)

TRADUKO DE "LA CONQUETE DU PAIN."

Fervora samideano kay kamarado deziras rilati sin kun cilanday esperantistoj, kiuj bonvolus traduki la gravan libron de Petro Kropotkin.

Pro tio oni petas, ke ĉiu sindona kamarado skribu al R. Fred Geyer, rua das Marrecas No. 22, Rio de Janeiro, Brazillando, pri la ĉapitroj aŭ paĝoj elektitaj. Tio, kiuj ne timas perdi laboron povus sendi tuj tradukaĵon.

En ĉiu okazo, per la samaj jurnalaj, la kunlaborantoj estos informataj pri la rezulto de tiu ĉi alvoko.—(Oni petas transkribon.)

[TRANSLATION.]

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