

Freedom

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NOTES.

"The Great Betrayal."

Keir Hardie is very wroth with the Government for not keeping its promise to legislate for the unemployed this Session. He calls it "the great betrayal," as if this was something unexpected in Parliamentary tactics, while at the same time Anarchists and anti-Parliamentary Socialists are being denounced for continuously warning the workers that they may expect nothing else from the ruling classes who practise the science of humbug at St. Stephen's. In reality, it is quite obvious that persons who go there as Labour M.P.'s are either silly-billies who would be cheated by the first "cheap jack" they met, and are incapable of taking care of themselves, let alone other people; or they are schemers and tricksters who are there to serve their own ends. In either case they are a nuisance and a danger to the cause of Socialism and the interests of the workers. And it should be clearly understood that "the great betrayal" consists not in the broken pledges of Asquith and Co., who are there for no other purpose than to hoodwink the people, but in the deliberate imbecility of those who urge the workers to put their hopes in a Parliament which is a disgrace to all sense of decency, and which, however "reformed" and however "controlled" by the "Labour element," will only be run by one set of humbugs in place of another.

First Principles.

What an advantage it would be if all those who are working for Socialism could discuss frankly and fearlessly the real aims and objects they have in view. As some correspondents have said, the stuff that is being preached as Socialism up and down the country is enough to make the capitalist chuckle with delight. For instance, the sky has been considerably darkened by a thick flight of "Reverends" in the direction of Socialism (?); and these birds of ill omen have been welcomed by all the opportunist sections of the movement, from the S.D.P. to the Fabian Society. Indeed, without knowing what these black-coated gentry really mean by Socialism, some of them have been the recipients of sickening adulation. Bernard Shaw, for instance, beslavered the Rev. R. J. Campbell to an extent that made it clear he was only preparing him to be swallowed into the abyss of Fabianism. But does this luminary really desire that alteration in the bases of society which Socialism demands? Not at all. He is only a dilettante metaphysician gracefully picking his way on the border line of State Socialism. And so it is with so many others. A free and courageous discussion of first principles is sadly needed.

The Deadly Strike.

The recent disclosures of the Russian spy system have given us a glimpse into that abomination of iniquity, the "art of government." The awful meaning of it all and the success of such monsters as Azeff is a subject that would need many pages to be adequately dealt with. But one fact has emerged that does not seem to have had the attention it deserves. In the great struggle between exploiters and wage-slaves, between political oppression and the champions of freedom, which in some shape or form is ever going on, it is clearly seen how in many directions the capitalist is able to hold his own against the workers by the strategics that the nature of the attack enable him to use effectively. In politics he has the bribery of place and position, as well as other means. In the Press he has full opportunity for debauching the minds of the people. In all movements he has the spy. But Azeff has proved that which should be learnt by all—strikes were the one thing that failed to turn to the Government's advantage. They tried to use it, but the weapon turned against themselves. This was put beyond all doubt. And it is of the utmost importance it should be known.

Perhaps now the opponents of the General Strike—real enemies of the Labour movement—will learn the lesson they have been needing.

An Englishman's Liberty.

The patriotic Englishman thinks there is nothing so certain in this life as his freedom. He is as sure that "Britons never will be slaves" as he is that "Britannia rules the waves." Let us see for a moment how his liberties have fared during the last twenty-five years. A quarter of a century is a very little time in the great struggle for freedom, but a few salient facts will show which way the stream has been running. At the beginning of that period a great and successful struggle was made for the right of free speech. But when a final effort against it was made by the Government refusing the use of Trafalgar Square, certain law-and-order partisans in the Trade Unions offered their help against the people, and so the reactionaries went the full length. As a result of this, and also as a consequence of the compromising attitude taken up by Social Democrats, "free speech" in parks and open spaces was placed under the control of officialism and red-tape. Again, as G. K. Chesterton has pointed out, the criticism of Royalty is wellnigh a tabooed subject nowadays; and the Jingoism is also demanding—and obtaining—the suppression of liberty simply to "protect" their idiotic stage shows. And last but not least comes the threat from high officials to forbid freedom of expression in discussing our infamous despotism in India. On this subject *Justice* for February 27 has a powerful and timely article full of the right spirit. But why not show the same front all round?

The Unwritten Law.

There is a growing tendency amongst judges and juries in certain cases to rely on the unwritten law. Not such a bad thing in itself; but let us note the instances when it has effect. These, it will be found, are always centred round the right of the husband—or at any rate the *male*—to avenge the unfaithfulness of the wife or the betrayal of a sister. In such cases the provocation is so great that, as a judge recently observed, the taking of life cannot be regarded as murder. Very well. But let us follow out this theory of "provocation," and see how the law behaves in other examples. What should we say of a man who tortured a starving animal by holding tempting food within its reach and yet never allowed it to satisfy its hunger? If the animal attacked and injured him, he would get his deserts. But that is precisely what one class of men is doing to another class every day of their lives. The hunger-stricken unemployed as they march through the West End and smell the luxurious dinners of the rich have provocation more cruel in many ways than that suffered by the "outraged" husband. Yet how does the law treat the sufferers who to end their tortures attack, not men, but property? Is not their provocation sufficient to exonerate them from the vindictiveness of the law? If the answer is "No," we advise the learned judges and smug juries to put it to the test themselves before they pass any more "judgments."

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DIRECT ACTION versus LEGISLATION.

By J. BLAIR SMITH.

IV.

Now let us contrast this slow, laborious, and uncertain method for securing the abolition or removal of the evils in our midst with that of the direct action of the people themselves. After all, Direct Action is no novelty. It has been practised again and again with more or less success, a success that certainly justifies its consideration as a method to effectually promote the happiness and well-being of the people. It means simply this—the firm, determined attitude on the part of the people to assert their rights and to pursue happiness whether such assertion or pursuit be considered illegal or not. We have already pointed out that law and government have nothing divine about them; that law, after all, is merely the opinions of men inscribed in the statute book; and that Parliament itself, which is now legality *par excellence*, owes its position to illegality of the worst sort—revolution. Parliament, therefore, whether it be that of this country or of the United States or of France, is merely illegality legalised, and now practises that which it revolted against—the usurpation of the right to determine the life and conditions of the people. We have no wish, still less reason, to condemn these revolts. We recognise in them the principle ingrained in humanity—covered though it may be by the veneer of respect for law—that great questions are not decided upon their legality or illegality. At periods such as these the dusty tomes of law are cast aside, and man stands up erect and decides by his own reason, knowledge, and experience the course of action he ought to pursue.

In these circumstances men do not argue whether an action is lawful or not, but upon the broader ground—whether it will conduce to the happiness of the people or not. John Hampden, when he refused to pay the ship money, committed an illegal action; but his refusal was based upon his denial of the right to impose this tax upon him. Perhaps there is nothing grander in history than the action of Richard Cameron riding into Sanquhar at the head of twenty men, affixing a proclamation to the market cross denouncing Charles II. as a bloody tyrant, throwing off their allegiance, and refusing to recognise his laws. A most illegal action! Twenty-one men defying the British Empire! And yet the freedom we possess to-day, civil and religious, such as it is, owes its existence to the determined, uncompromising, illegal action of such men as these. In the seventeenth century, unlike the twentieth century, men's brains were not so befogged by the musty cobwebs of law. These men did not argue upon the legality or illegality of their actions. The decision that an action was moral, in the interests of the people and of human happiness, made its commission imperative. Their own consciences were the final arbiters. Here, of course, we had direct action carried to the extreme; an extreme which has not been necessary since, and is still less necessary to-day.

It is, however, unnecessary to go back to those days to find examples of the successful attainment of an object by the direct action of the people; we can find many examples in the nineteenth century, even in our own day. To-day, when one considers the amount of respect which is paid to our Trade Unions, it is difficult to realise that at one time, comparatively recent, these same Trade Unions were outside the pale of the law, and law and government did their utmost to crush them. Again and again men were sent to prison, under the old Conspiracy Acts, for daring to assert the right of combination to protect themselves from the rapacity and cruelty of the employers. And how did the Trade Unionists of those days reply to this persecution? Did they look at the question from a *legal* point of view and submit to the law, instead of being guided by a higher principle than that of legality? Did they petition Parliament after Parliament? Did they approach M.P. after M.P., humbly, supplicantly, to ask their aid to assist them to obtain legal recognition and the free exercise of their undeniable rights? Had they done so, our Trade Unions would not have been legalised even yet. The Trade Unionists of those days were not so imbued with respect for the law as they are in ours. The law having refused to recognise their Unions, they refused to recognise the right of the law to interfere with them. Again and again, in the face of the law, they asserted their right to combine; and so persistent was their agitation, so determined was the attitude they took up, that the Government, powerless in the face of such energy and the rising tide of popular discontent, fearful of revolution, seeing no other way out of the difficulty they had made for themselves, legalised the Trade Unions—that is, by Act of Parliament gave them permission to act as they always had been acting without Parliamentary sanction—and allayed the agitation. All that Parliament did was to withdraw a prohibition which they had no right to attempt to enforce, and they cannot expect the thanks of the working class for an Act of this description wrung from them by compulsion. Parliament did not form the Trade Unions, as some people are apt to consider to-day; these were formed in spite of Parliament, and the whole agitation, in which men were victimised and imprisoned, was caused by the meddling interference of Parliament in the affairs of private individuals who were quite competent to manage their own affairs.

Thus we find that many of our Trade Unions which are so respectable to-day owe their origin and their continued existence, not to Parliamentary methods, but to a firm determination to assert a principle whether that principle was legal or illegal, so long as they

deemed it in the best interests of the class to which they belonged. A few years of this uncompromising attitude, accompanied by persistent agitation, and the fight was won. Contrast this with the many questions which have endeavoured unsuccessfully to gain the attention of Parliament during the last fifty years.

I have already mentioned the barren results which Ireland has obtained through political agitation, an agitation carried on persistently for about a century, and yet it is only a few months since we read harrowing accounts of the terrible poverty and misery of the peasants on the West Coast of Ireland. A century of political action with nothing to show for it but a record of speeches. Contrast this with the direct action of the inhabitants of Tipperary in County Clare. Here the "plan of campaign" was inaugurated and the peasants determined to pay no rent whatever until they received a reduction. In a few months they were allowed, not only a reduction, but all arrears of rent were wiped off as well. The "no rent" plan of campaign showed signs of spreading all over Ireland, and had it not been for the Irish Nationalist Members, backed by the Pope, this method would have effectually solved the whole Irish question. No better method could possibly have been adopted, for a determination on the part of the whole people to withhold all rent, while at the same time carefully abstaining from all demonstration or violence, would have rendered the Government and Parliament practically helpless, and the complete solution of the whole Irish question would have been the only way out of the difficulty. The Nationalist Members were fully aware of this, and, of course, desiring to retain their positions, they succeeded (with the help of the Pope) in dissuading the people from carrying this policy of direct action to its ultimate conclusion. The result of their action we see to-day. Home Rule is further off from being realised than it was in the days of the Plan of Campaign. Since then the world has witnessed the rupture of the Irish Party, and the politicians who were so eager to redress the wrongs of Ireland *themselves* rather than allow the people to do so by their own action, are now busily engaged discussing personalities and bandying words with each other, while the lot of the people remains practically unchanged. Only when the people of Ireland learn the lesson which so many years of political action and so many failures ought to have taught them—that they must not trust to politicians but assert themselves—will the day of Irish freedom dawn.

We have also examples in this country of the success of direct action. In Leicester and one or two other towns in England, where there is a strong feeling against vaccination, the Vaccination Acts are a dead letter. The force of public opinion is so great, the number of people who refuse to obey the law in this respect so large, that the authorities, finding themselves unable to enforce the Acts, have ceased altogether from attempting to do so.

Many more cases of a similar character could be cited, but these are, I think, sufficient to prove the contention that the direct action of the people themselves is a speedier and more effectual method of remedying our social and economic grievances than by appealing to Parliament, and possibly waiting ten or twenty years to find that, after all, the grievance has been only half-remedied, if at all.

Direct action to-day does not entail the sacrifices requisite two or three hundred years ago, or even fifty years ago. If we really desire the elevation of the whole of humanity there is no force, either governmental or otherwise, which can withstand us. It is but necessary for us as a people, when we consider a law is inimical to our happiness, to act as if it did not exist. By continually ignoring the laws which are not in harmony with our ideas of truth and justice we can render them null and void long before they could possibly be abolished by Parliamentary methods. Just as the force of public opinion has relegated old laws to the dustheap of the ages—laws which have never been abolished—so can we to-day, by our individual and collective action, effectually render inoperative such laws as we consider out of harmony with the spirit of the age and the happiness of the people. There may be suffering, you say, sacrifices to be made. True; but will the sum total of the suffering inflicted for disobeying laws equal, or nearly equal, the suffering which goes on to-day owing to these unjust laws, to say nothing of the degradation which comes of obeying bad laws? Besides, suffering will only be inflicted when the protesters are few and weak; when a large section of the people range themselves upon their side, the struggle will be won. Whenever the people are convinced upon any particular subject, no more wirepulling need be resorted to; no more years and years of wordy warfare before the will of the people obtains recognition; the people's desire will be translated into action whenever that desire is formulated. Their opinion, for the first time, will be supreme—will be the real lever which will remove the ills of to-day, and make for happier conditions for all. No Parliament, no referendums are necessary. A law is bad; the people consider it bad. Well, there is no necessity for petitions and speeches if people are really in earnest. Disobey it! disobey it in force, and that law will be heard of no more.

Direct action, after all, simply means that each of us individually must decide for himself or herself the morality or immorality of any course of action; and having decided, to act or refuse to act, according to the circumstances of the case and the character of the question involved. No longer will we puzzle our brains with legality and illegality; the simple right or wrong will suffice for us. Our course of action will no longer be influenced by the opinions of other men, except in so far as we ourselves consider desirable. All that we require to do is to set our faces firmly in the direction we desire to travel—the direction

of human freedom and happiness. As we are men, and our lawmakers no more, we are quite as competent as they to decide the affairs of life. By this course of action we rid ourselves of all the lying and cheating, the intriguing and chicanery which is inherent in Parliamentary and political life. No longer will our happiness and well-being depend upon any set of men.

By adopting direct action the people themselves can deal directly with this social question, which is perplexing and worrying the best brains of our time. And just as fast as public opinion ripens upon any phase of the social problem, just as soon will that part of it be solved. Don't say we are too weak. The men who formed and sustain our Trade Unions, the men who by voluntary effort built up that splendid network of Co-operative Societies, surely are strong enough to carry their work a little farther.

There is a feeling among some Co-operators to-day to enter the political arena. If they but considered the splendid work already accomplished without the help of Parliament, they would certainly hesitate on entering a field of action so little productive of good and so prolific of evil.

Our Co-operative Societies have nothing to gain from political action. They have much to lose. They can accomplish all that is necessary outside of Parliament far more efficiently. With the tremendous force of public sympathy which they possess it is only necessary for them to say, "This law hampers us; we intend to disregard it in the future," and the law and Government dare not prosecute or in any way attempt to enforce the objectionable law in question, faced as they would be by the determined, awakened public opinion of the country. The Co-operators will have an enormous influence on the progress and development of the people when they look upon life and its manifestations from a moral instead of a legal point of view. By so doing, and eschewing Parliament, they will save themselves from much heartburning, wasted hopes, and miserable failure. Then they will take their place in the van of the forward movement, marching to the conquest of the future.

For the individual the change will be great. Instead of considering his duty accomplished when he crosses a few pieces of paper at long intervals, he will study life for himself, and be prepared to act upon his own conclusions. The remedy being direct, every evil of our time will appeal to him directly. The possibility of removing these evils being within his reach, he will no longer look upon them with apathy and indifference. The gulf which to-day separates thought and action will be bridged, and happiness will be the result, for happiness, after all, lies in the conformity of thought and action.

To achieve our aims, to effect the reforms we consider necessary, and at the same time develop the moral tone, the self-reliance, and the individuality of the people, there need be no violence, no theatrical *dénouements*. Without force, or threats of force, it is but necessary to sit tight; and by sheer weight of dogged determination in refusing to recognise or obey laws which we are convinced are inimical to the life, well-being, and happiness of the community, we can exert an influence on the public opinion of our time which will relegate these laws to the scrap-heap.

We have but to consider how strong we are, and that all that is necessary to-day to make the changes we desire, to make life worth living, to make it a pleasure where now it is a misery, to bring happiness and mirth where now there are sorrow and tears, to make men and women truly great, glorying in their manhood and womanhood, with the joy of life pulsating through their veins, with intelligence, intellectuality, and nobility of character stamped upon their features, where now we have stunted wretches, sodden in misery, weary of life, destitute of all interest in art or science, with degraded, drunk and vice-soiled bodies wasting away to the grave,—to make this change all we want is **THE WILL**. All that Nature lays before us, all that Science day by day unfolds to us, all the beauties in Art and Nature; all these are ours if we have but the energy and determination to seize them.

Cease this playing with golden counters, when the stake too often is the life and happiness of thousands, and interest yourself with the real facts of life. Come out of your cities, where, crowded like rabbits in a warren, you never learn the beauties of earth and sky and sea and shore, and the living things upon the earth. Learn to look at the sunlight and breathe the air of freedom away from your fetid cities with their foul smells of decaying garbage. Learn that Nature is grander and more beautiful than your hovels of brick and stone. Learn that there is a grandeur and beauty in the budding shoots of spring, and in the waving fields of yellow corn, for which your mean and sordid streets can never compensate. Remember, above all, that it is life you want, free, full, vibrating, pulsating with vigour, fully developed, physical, emotional, and intellectual, carelessly scattering its gifts around, bringing joy and happiness to your fellows instead of the misery and unrest of to-day. All this life is possible if you have but the will.

THE END.

NOTICE.—This series of articles on "DIRECT ACTION *versus* LEGISLATION" will be republished in pamphlet form. Price 1d. Ready on March 23.

"Go down a mine or visit any industrial city—and say if what you behold there does not far transcend what the fiercest theologian has portrayed of Hell."—*Anatole France*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ANARCHISM AND PARASITES.

(To the Editor of FREEDOM.)

DEAR COMRADE,—In reply to correspondent E. W. H., his main point is—What is the way out of this system of inequality? and he gives us his way, which he names the only way out—organised, intelligent, collective effort.

True, in my article I gave no cut-and-dried way out, and steered clear of dogmatising, blaming, praising, or comparing. Sufficient for me to state things as they appear to me; perchance they may have like appearance to others, and so be accepted as obvious facts.

What precise form society will take in the future I do not know. In the course of evolution E. W. H.'s only way will have a place; but why shut out with his only way my particular kink, my "I believe," which is the illusion of Anarchist Individualism? For the time being I have joined issue with the nearest illusion to my illusion, Anarchist Communism. Be my moral code what it may, it will not be imposed on another; and I shall resist as powerfully as possible every reformer whose endeavour is to push me in line with his or her moral code.

What confusion! We have an insanity legislation, and a no less insanity coercive organisation; outside of legislation, we have a microbe in our brain pots: the desire to put everyone else straight (our idea of straight), overlooking the all-important necessity of removing the barrowful of crookedness from our own brain. If our ideas are sound, and will bear universal application, depend upon it our best method is to state our case, and that is all we can do. Force persons against their will, they remain of the same opinion still. To my mind, the mistake of legislators and also coercive organisers (now, comrades, don't bite my head off)—the two are identical—is the presumption of both parties that they know what is best for all, etc.; same desire to coerce objectors into submission; each croaks the old croak: we are going to deal out justice, do good, etc.

Ah! we have a concept of good, justice, general welfare; then the desire to do that good; then, ye Gods, woe to that mortal whom we chase with our halo of goodness if he doth not fit it with speed.

He mentions conscience. This I take to be the self and non-self. I believe it to be an illusion of the senses; may be a necessary balance to our hypocrisy and cant.

As to solutions. I have heard many. That society will perish, and 'tis necessary it should perish, like the decaying seed, giving forth new life; that we are a race of hypocrites, *canaille*; but save the mark, out of us will come the Superman, and lo hush! keep it dark, he is with us; even yet while we knew it not a Superman is with us; he wrote me the other day, declaring himself the forerunner of the new race, the Superman. Not G. B. S.—he's another.

Then we have the Socialist's solution, and yet again the new microbe, the organising Anarchist, and woe to ye who do not bow to his moral and social code. Poor suffering humanity, when will we see the advantage of leaving each other alone? How can we know what is best for others when our ideas of what is best for ourselves undergoes constant change?

To me it appears we shall pass through many aspects of coercive organisation, evolving at last to an organisation based on mutual aid; and out of this rough husk the apology for man which now creeps, crawls and cringes o'er the earth will evolve to a man who will trust his fellow, be above mean use of advantage, neither hiring himself out as a slave nor enslaving another.

One word more. Those who believe and aid in coercive organisation or government, Socialistic or otherwise, are the flatterers of this system of society, chase an illusion of freedom, and actuated by the same motive as the capitalists; and subconsciously the bourgeoisie recognises in you an accomplice.

In reply to S. J. Foster, did some one mention the outline of my article to him, or did he hear it discussed in a Clarion circle? It would certainly answer his questions if he read it, for I had anticipated him. Observe my preface: "Let me state the case as it appears to me." Observe, no blame, praise or comparison. Observe, no attempt to justify my parasitism. Why? Because it is impossible.

He does not count himself as superior to any member of "that great lying Church." Oh, that will do.

FREEDOM columns are for general news. If he is in earnest he can get to know the difference of our personal views by writing to my private address, which he knows; and, as he is averse to cant, etc., it may be well if he avoided pretending he does not know.—Yours fraternally,

C. H. KEAN.

Books Received.

Wastage of Child Life. By J. Johnston, M.D., Edin. Second edition. 6d. net. London: John Heywood, Ltd., Lamb's Conduit Street, W.C.

Banking and the Social Problem. By Henry Meulen. 3d. Published by the Author, 19 Boscombe Road, Shepherd's Bush, London.

Almanacco della Rivoluzione, 1909. 500 reis. S. Paolo, Brazil: *La Battaglia*, Casella Postale 547.

Dónde está Dios? By M. Rey, 10c. Barcelona: Tapineria 27 y 29, Pral 1A.

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THE GREAT CRIMINAL.

If it were not an axiom that superstitions die hard, it might give cause for wonder that men should, as they do, constantly turn to the State to help them by its legislative enactments to stem the evils in social life. At the present moment the cry for State interference in the "regulation" of social life is louder than ever, thanks mainly to the blind folly of the Labour Party, who are giving importance to an institution which is a farce from one point of view, and from another the blackest tragedy of the age.

The State, in fact, is the Great Criminal; and while the machinery of the law is used in hunting down the poor little thieves and the often irresponsible people who kill to rob, or more probably through passion, the wholesale plunderer, the pitiless destroyer of human life, is appealed to to remove the burdens which its own existence creates!

A full indictment of all the crimes of government could not be given even in a volume, and must be sought for in a long study of its terrible history. But in the passing events of the day enough can be found by those who will use their reason to justify mankind in striving for the total abolition of that hopeless malefactor—the State. And all this quite independently of any abstract theories, which also have their value, as to the rights of individuals against coercive majorities.

The latest example of government's evil-doing is to be found in the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission. It need hardly be said that this Report has not been drawn up by Anarchists. Far from it. The authors, indeed, are persons still imbued with the superstitious idea that the State is a necessary institution. Therefore they may be trusted to say the best they can on its behalf. And what is the "best"? Such a record of blood-guiltiness as would hurry an ordinary criminal to the gallows, without the least hope of reprieve. Truly, the mere "baby-farmer" is a ministering angel compared to the "State as step-mother"—to use the expression of the *Daily News*.

To keep within "proper bounds," we will quote only from the letter appearing in the *Daily News* (March 3rd), and signed by Lady Frances Balfour, E. S. Haldane, Sydney Holland, and Henrietta O. Barnett. After this it will be understood that the following statements are not the "wild ravings of blood-thirsty Anarchists." To begin with, the letter bears the sub-title "The Massacre of the Innocents." It will be noted here that when the State goes in for killing, it generally means a "massacre." That is where it is so superior to the ordinary or common murderer.

First of all we are told that no less than 11,000 children are born each year who become step-children of the State—11,000 little voices crying for help in the wilderness of officialism! One fears what will happen, but let us keep to facts. Amongst the ordinary population, out of every 1,000 babies born 130 die in the first year, a fact which appals our worthy legislators, who forthwith saddle the parents with the responsibility of it all. "In the 450 workhouses of which we have information the death-rate in the first year is between two and three times as great." This gives a death-rate of 330 per 1,000, which must be a fairly good example to the "common people" of how the great institution—without which there would be no security for life!—finds an effective check to the increase of population.

But let us now see how this "massacre" is accomplished. This time it is the *British Medical Journal* that speaks:—

"Pauper imbeciles cannot be said to be proper guardians for young children, and even paupers who are not imbeciles are not the persons that any one, except a Government authority, would choose for this purpose. When to this is added the

primitive nature of the sanitary appliances, and the usual absence of any quarantine arrangements for infants entering from outside, it is not surprising that epidemic disorders are sometimes officially described as 'very troublesome.'"

This is not the description, be it noted, of some poor rack-rented slum-dweller's house, but of an institution paid for by the people, organised by the State, and controlled by *paid officials*. No one, says the writer, "except a Government authority, would choose for this purpose" the persons found superintending. The mere common mortal would do things differently; he would use a little sense, and *might* have a little humanity. But that would mean the people doing things for themselves—direct action—and would be a menace to Government. So instead we have such instances as that recorded (*vide Daily News*) of a pauper imbecile washing a baby in boiling water—and all is well in a State-governed country!

We have given this as one instance of how we live—and die—under State control. It is impossible to enumerate the many other instances wherein the Great Criminal works with equally deadly effect. To an unbiassed mind, the above record would be enough to condemn once for all the whole system of State organisation. But "unbiassed minds" are hard to find; and without knowing it, the great majority of people have taken for granted what they have been taught, and can imagine no other way of doing things but that imposed upon them by the class who keep them in subjection. Yet even in the most degraded homes such things would not be tolerated as are enacted daily by Government officials, any more than it would be possible amongst savage peoples to find such a barbarous sight as is seen in London, with its starving unemployed gazing helplessly in windows filled with food and clothing. Such things are possible only with a civilised and educated nation which submits to being governed by a State that absorbs £160,000,000 a year. It does one thing, however, very effectually. It supports the exploiters, who heartily return the compliment. What gives cause for deep regret is that the *exploited* should be found supporting it as well.

"FOUNDING" OF THE RIGHT TO LIVE CAMPAIGN.

The meeting to inaugurate this campaign, which was held at the Holborn Town Hall on Tuesday, February 23, was almost too funny for words. The air of mystery surrounding the "founder's" name was not sufficient to attract a crowd, the prices of 6d. and 1s. being an effectual barrier to those mostly interested in the question—the unemployed. Mr. Swainson, the mysterious "founder," spoke so feelingly in picturing the terrible suffering wrought by unemployment that we thought he would prove a Dr. Stockman, the strong man in Ibsen's play who could stand alone; but the result proved him to be very much like Mr. Aslaksen, the "agent for the Moderation Society." He wanted to put a stop to unemployment, but would do nothing to interfere with private enterprise. The campaign, according to the printed programme, will adopt "*conciliatory methods*," and "people of wealth will at once perceive the reasonableness and soundness of our proposals, and also appreciating the fact that they must either support this campaign or *foster revolution*, they will support us. The success of our movement will benefit them as well as the workers." (The italics are as printed.)

This brilliant programme was supported by Mr. Muggeridge, who "damned it with faint praise," saying the principal reason for his presence was the fact that he was a cousin of a member of the committee. A member of the I.L.P. also supported it, and said that they must adopt militant tactics like the Suffragettes. He was quite prepared to go to prison. This speaker was thrown overboard by the "founder," who said he liked the fighting spirit shown, but for himself he was in favour of moderate measures. He evidently thinks it possible to make omelettes without breaking eggs.

The farce was brought to a conclusion by an amendment by Mr. S. Hobson in favour of a United Socialist Party, which was carried by the greater number of those present, with the result that the ship launched by the "founder" has foundered on its trial trip.

The smiles on the faces of the committee led me to think that they will not send out a salvage party. T. H. K.

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

The Italian Proletariat and the Messina Catastrophe.

"When the news of the disaster at Messina and Reggio de Calabria became known in the large towns of the centre and especially the north of Italy, the Italian Trade Unionists at once comprehended that an occasion, beyond anything that had occurred before, had arisen for putting *direct action* into practice.

That same evening immense meetings were held in Rome, Bologna, Florence, Leghorn, Milan, Turin, Genoa, etc., and the local Federations and Labour Exchanges constituted themselves in permanent session. It was immediately recognised that the Government was incapable of giving efficient help; that the intervention of the Army, a measure of a primitive and exclusive character, would merely be a renewed affirmation of militarism, which would thus be cleansed at a single stroke from all its fusillades of strikers and other ill deeds. The workers also perceived that the aid the bourgeois might give by money collections would be insufficient, and, above all, would arrive too late. They understood that *instant* action was necessary if the survivors and injured were to be saved. Only the workers in building trades, assisted by doctors, nurses and engineers, together with bakers and catering employees, would be able to render rapid and effective assistance. Such was the opinion, endorsed with cheers, at all the meetings; and on every side the workers were invited to be at the railway stations as early as possible the following morning, and to hold themselves in readiness to start in such numbers as should be judged necessary: to determine these some rapid calculation and an exchange of communications over the telephone between the different cities would suffice.

During the night, in each town the Prefect and the railway officials were made acquainted with the resolution taken, and a request made that trains for the south or the neighbouring ports might be placed at the disposition of those who desired to leave. The large tool shops, for pickaxes, etc., were also visited, as were the chemists and the clothing and provision warehouses. The proprietors, assured of being amply reimbursed through the collections being made in the town and elsewhere, placed everything at the disposal of the Trade Unions.

The following morning saw an immense crowd of workers prepared to start. The men knew that a certain proportion must be kept between the various trades, and that it was especially the strongest and most skilful who should be the first to leave; the remainder could follow later on. Doctors and students, engineers and nurses, joined themselves to the workers.

At the outset the authorities were taken by surprise, but menaced with an absolute general strike and universal chaos, and seeing that the movement was irresistible, nothing was left them but to yield. Some timorous workers had objected that if they left for the south others would hasten to take their vacant places, and that their employers might refuse to reinstate them on their return. But it was enough to tell them that the masters who acted in this manner, and the blacklegs who might wish to supplant their fellows while temporarily absent, would have an unpleasant time of it. Moreover, as in Italy there is a considerable body of men who in summer work in Switzerland, Austria, Germany, etc., returning to their villages for the winter, it was arranged that rather than leave the question on sufferance, a number of these should go into the towns and temporarily take over the positions of the absentees, to whom, of course, such positions would be given up on their return. Thus reassured and free from anxiety, all those about to leave started on their journey, the municipalities binding themselves to provide for the needs of their families. A few mean spirits tried hard to contend that no one should go before the number of working hours and a minimum wage were fixed; but such narrow-minded fanatics were laughed to derision.

At the great ports, Genoa, Leghorn, Naples, Ancona, etc., it was known before the morning of that day that trains filled with builders' men were approaching; at once the dockers and entire maritime personnel (through threat of an immediate general strike and permanent boycott in case of opposition) arranged for swift steamers to be laden on the spot with coal, provisions, etc., and to be held in readiness for the trains of workmen and material that were expected in the afternoon. So that, sailing before night, thirty to forty large vessels, carrying about thirty thousand well-equipped workers, disembarked

their respective crews the next morning at various points of the region devastated by the cataclysm. A second contingent formed under the same conditions arrived the succeeding day; and one also noticed some French and Spanish boats from Marseilles and Barcelona, which had brought Union workers of France and Spain recruited in a similar manner. During the voyage the men had organised themselves into groups, and immediately upon disembarkation every street saw its required group at work—doctors, etc.—who, with engineers at their head, began to seek and succour the *living*, postponing for the moment the futile labour of gathering up the dead, as had been done by some troops who first hurried to the scene. These soldiers, yielding place to the workers, made themselves useful by forming a cordon to keep back sundry brave peasants of the neighbourhood, who had hastened in to pilfer or to cut off the fingers of such of the injured as had rings on them!

Thanks to this unity of measures, a great number of the living was saved, and the condition of the injured was far more satisfactory than had they not been attended to until after long days of suspense and privation.

Here, then, was seen a unique spectacle, which proved to all the world the efficacy of direct action. It was the revenge and the triumph of Labour. These pioneers of revolutionary Trade Unionism were christened by the popular voice 'the Garibaldians of Direct Action,' who, a second time descending upon Sicily, have inaugurated Italian regeneration—this time the real one, the one that will endure. At a single bound, direct labour has outrun the powerless mechanism of government, of militarism, of bourgeois organisation.

Alas! all that I have related above is not a reality, it is but a beautiful dream. It is not what took place, it is what might have taken place had the Italian proletariat possessed clear ideas—yet what will happen one day, in other circumstances, we venture to hope."

The above extract from a private letter written early in January was sent by my correspondent to the *Voix du Peuple*, the Syndicalist organ of French Switzerland (Lausanne, January 16). I had no opportunity then to add two or three remarks, namely, these. A short time hence great numbers of workers will be sent to Messina and Calabria, in any case, to rebuild the destroyed townships. As usual, capitalists and their middlemen will make fortunes over this,* and the position of the workpeople will remain as downtrodden as ever. This might have been very different if the Italian workers in the way suggested had come to the front in the hour of need, and had by their pluck won the admiration of the whole world. Then, surely, their Trade Unions would have found large support in a further proposal which they might have made: to rebuild Messina themselves, without any profits to capitalists, with funds for raw materials and wages which the municipalities would advance; other funds for tools and preliminary expenses could have been supplied by the richer Unions and by the Co-operative movement, which in general could have found great scope for action over there. In this way, also, strongly built and hygienic constructions would be erected, instead of rebuilding cheap and crumbling slums, which the greed of private landlords will probably favour. We should have had a unique example of Labour at work for its own sake—a new experience which certainly would have found imitation and further development elsewhere. And this is what we so sorely need—action, initiative, new ground opened.

It is not too much to expect such an example from Italian workers, as they have shown by their numerous general strikes of late years how finely developed are their feelings of solidarity. Nor are they lacking in courage, as, e.g., we saw in May, 1898, when, on hearing of fighting in Milan, in many parts of Switzerland they threw down their tools and hurried in bands over the Alps to the frontier—only to be captured, unfortunately, after the defeat in Milan, by the Swiss public forces, and handed over to Italian gendarmes and soldiers.

One remark in the extract has proved erroneous: seven weeks of military rule in Messina have entirely obliterated the favourable impression which the first few days' useful work of the soldiers may have created. The absolute incapacity of the State, bureaucracy and army, to be of use when assistance is needed was never made clearer than by their seven weeks' absolute rule in the earthquake country: the earthquake itself was a blessing in comparison with this curse.

M. N.

* A London firm has been given the contract for rebuilding the barracks at Messina and Reggio.

SENT TO JAIL FOR STRIKING.

The Industrial Court at Sydney, N.S.W., was uncomfortably crowded by rock-choppers and other Unionists, including a number of women, on November 2, when the first prosecution in connection with the recent cessation of work by the rock-choppers was initiated.

The first case taken was against J. Ryan, secretary of the Union. The information against him was that between October 20 and 28 he unlawfully instigated a strike, which caused a cessation of work by which a number of employees of the Water and Sewerage Board discontinued their employment.

Mr. Mant appeared for the Crown, and Mr. Croft for Ryan.

Charles Rhodes, chief inspector for the Board, said that between October 20 and 28 he was inspecting the progress of sewerage works at North Willoughby. A man named Charles Withers was one of the employees, and he was a good workman. Ryan told him (Rhodes) that the men did not wish to work with Withers, who had flouted the Union. He replied that Mr. Smail had directed that Withers was not to be dismissed. Ryan replied, "Very well, then, we will have to strike."

To Mr. Croft: Witness said he believed the men could leave at a moment's notice. They had done so on this occasion. The strike had caused a deal of trouble to the department. Ryan did not ask him to have Withers removed to some other position of the service, but had made a request of the kind at the office.

John M. Smail, engineer-in-chief of the Board, said that Ryan had told him that Withers had been flouting the Union inside and out, and that the men would not work with him. He replied that the Board could not take up the position of aiding in the collection of subscriptions for the Union. On the same day, October 27, he received a letter from Ryan stating that "work will be discontinued until such time as the cause of the trouble has been removed."

To Mr. Croft: Witness said that the custom was for these temporary men to leave or be dismissed without notice.

Mr. Croft submitted that the contractor's men were not employees of the Board, and the information was restricted to employees of the Board. Therefore the evidence of other alleged strikes was not admissible. There was no evidence of instigation by Ryan.

The defendant, John Ryan, a resident of Paddington, said that he had been paid secretary of the Union for eight months. He remembered seeing Mr. Rhodes under instructions by resolution of the Union. He told Mr. Rhodes that he was instructed to apply for the removal of Withers from the job, because the men would not work with him. Subsequently Mr. Rhodes said that Mr. Smail refused to remove Withers from the job. He never asked for Withers' dismissal. The Union wanted Withers put on the permanent staff. The rock-choppers were casual men. He then saw Mr. Smail, who said he would not comply with the request. On October 20 he was on the job at North Willoughby. There was a gathering of the majority of the men.

Mr. Mant: Who were responsible for the strike?—The majority of the men at a meeting on October 19.

Mr. Mant: Your defence is that you did not favour a cessation of work, and did all you could to prevent it?—I don't say I did all I could to prevent it.

In your official capacity did you assist in the cessation of work?—Yes, in carrying out the instructions I was paid to carry out.

Did you ever say you were against the cessation of work?—No; I was never asked.

Are you against it now?—No.

There were loud cries of "Hear, hear," and stamping of feet from the couple of hundred men who had crowded into the Court.

Are you in favour of it?

A Voice: Own up.

Witness: No.

Are you a sympathiser with this cessation of work?—No; I deplore the cessation of work, but I am in sympathy with it.

There were more cheers and stamping of feet.

His Honour said if there was any more of it the Court would have to be cleared.

In answer to Mr. Mant, witness said that Withers had fired rackarock, which was against the rules of the Union. Withers did so at the request of an officer of the Board, and when the Board learned that Withers had been fined for firing the rackarock, the Board offered to pay the fine; but it was then too late, for the cessation of work had commenced. Withers, who was president of the Union at one time, refused to pay the fine on the 19th, and then the resolutions were carried. There were other reasons why the men would not work with Withers, who said that he would work with them in spite of them, and would not pay any more contributions, because he had the Board behind him. At the meeting of the 21st he had voted with the eight, against two, calling the men out.

This was the defence.

His Honour said he did not think that the technicality raised sheltered Ryan. It was clear that Ryan had been forward in, and a promoter of, the matter. As secretary, it would be difficult for Ryan to be otherwise, unless he resigned. The men put Ryan there, and how could the defendant act other than to be a zealous promoter of their wishes? Otherwise Ryan would not have the position. Here Ryan had been a promoter.

Now, added his Honour, came the disagreeable and responsible

duty of stating what penalty should be imposed. He was driven to the conclusion that it was a serious case because of the character of deliberate resolve and concerted action shown in it. Here they had fellow citizens deliberately deciding upon and inciting a plain breach of the law of the land. He did not like to say that it was a crime, although technically a breach of the law was a crime, and technically the offender was a criminal. Still, he did not like to introduce such a word in connection with Ryan, who, he was perfectly certain, was not of the criminal class. But it might be defined as an act of rebellion. . . . To enforce the decree of a Union, Ryan has been a deliberate party to a breach of the law of the State. I will not say it is criminal, because that is a nasty word, but is it not the action of rebels? Can any one say that the law of the State shall be put below the law of a Union?

A Voice: If it is wrong, yes.

His Honour, continuing: The law, I take it, is the expression of opinion of a majority of the country. All have a perfect right to their views. Now, supposing the law was quite the opposite to what it is, and a body of men offended with some act, and ostentatiously and deliberately disobeyed it. I am putting this to Ryan so that he may be his own judge. Supposing the offenders were brought before a public servant, as I am. I am certain that a public servant would act with culpable weakness if he did not use the powers given him by the Legislature to see that the law is carried out. I am the instrument of the Legislature, and I would very much like those interested to think over the matter. A deliberate disobedience of the law, however unwise or unjust the legislation might be, cannot be overlooked.

Concluding, his Honour said that according to the circumstances he had to be lenient or severe. This was the result of purely domestic trouble in a Union. He was very, very sorry, and it was with great regret that he found himself driven to the conclusion that he would be guilty of a breach of duty if he was not severe. He was very sorry indeed. The penalty would be a fine of £30, or six weeks' imprisonment.

There was a storm of hooting when the sentence was pronounced, one of the most disorderly scenes ever seen in a Courtroom in this State being the outcome. Men stood on their feet and yelled in an ecstasy of anger and indignation, and amid the hooting there were cheers for Ryan. Notwithstanding that the Judge was still on the bench, the men disregarded the cries of the attendants to remove their hats. They clambered over benches and pressed up to Ryan to shake him by the hand. One of the first to reach him was a woman.

After the Court had adjourned, Ryan was asked by a reporter of the *Daily Telegraph* if the fine would be paid.

"Pay the fine!" he replied. "No—fear; if it was six years I would serve every minute of it! There will be hundreds more in before I'm out."—*Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, N.S.W.

SIMMERING DEMOCRACY.

Signs of the times are not lacking. I do not refer to the fog, or the wintry weather, or even the invasion by Carrie Nation. No; I refer to the simmering, suppressed excitement of the suppressed people. Before a kettle of water boils over it must of necessity rise to the point by slow stages. And when a people are simmering it shows conclusively that they are very near the boiling-over point.

And by simmering I do not mean that the common people are desirous of a change of an economic system. Not at all. The people do not at present cry aloud for that change. But what I do mean is that "something" is happening in the public mind. Demos is discontented—with what he does not know. But, Mr. Editor, Demos is discontented. He says, "I am poor and destitute. My children are starving and in rags. Why should these things be?" That is a sign of the times. This article is a sign. The speeches of M.P.'s are signs. The whole time of the orator is devoted to the question of poverty. And great things are going to happen.

"Yes," says the Tariff Reformer, "we are going to have Protection." "Ah," says the temperance advocate, "we are travelling towards Prohibition." We may be travelling on to either or both. We may glorify Carrie Nation or Mr. Chamberlain. We may argue about General Booth or the Labour "statesmen"—but Demos is discontented. He wants—something.

Evidence! Evidence in abundance. I stood upon the Embankment in the fog. By my side stood a poor, broken-down musician. He had been playing his violin all day, and had earned threepence. A well-dressed, portly man passed—and the musician cursed him. Evidence! I saw a poorly-clad woman singing in the street, and as a sister in fur and muff passed she burst into tears. And when she had recovered her composure she asked the question—"Why should she be well clothed and well fed while I am starving?"

The people are blindly walking to their own salvation. The people are unconsciously crying for—what? For that day when

commercial greed shall be no more. The people are crying for purer air, purer food, purer education, purer morals. The people are crying for happier lives and brighter futures. They are crying, my brothers, in the slum and the hovel, in the workshop and the sweater's den, in the workhouse and the prison. There is wailing and gnashing of teeth. The common people are saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan." In the land there is a panic. Unemployed marches are becoming too frequent. Inquiries into religion are becoming too searching. Legislators and Labour fakirs tremble. Because—Demos is simmering.

In this special ring of ours the germ of a revolution has become rooted. And the infection is slowly implanting itself in the human mind. The wronged are searching for the wrongdoer. The wealth producers are slowly becoming aware of the hypocrisy of the wealth grabbers. Discontent reigns supreme. The Christian gospel of content is slowly dying—not to the tune of the "Dead March," but rather to the tune of the "Marseillaise." Truth and honesty are slowly raising their heads from the pillow of sleep, and are gazing around at sordid civilisation with its dirt, disease, crime, poverty and misery. Demos has passed through the cold water stage and now—What next?

G. NEWMAN STEWART.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

Italy.

Some of the principal Trade Union organisations are preparing to hold a national Direct Action Congress at Bologna, March 18 to 21. The Labour Confederation, established in Turin, is directed by some of the most conservative spirits of Social Democracy; and for long there has been friction between them and the more advanced and revolutionary bodies of organised workmen. The Confederation has more than once stood in the way of successful strikes, and has won the approbation of the Press and authorities for its severe repression of the revolutionary sections in its midst. One of its worst crimes was its conduct during the agrarian disturbances in Parma. The Confederation, with all the Social Democratic press, had promised the peasants support. Directly the Government threatened to place the district in a state of siege, the Confederation set to work to strangle the agrarian movement. Incidentally, the Government had also menaced the Social Democrat leaders with exile. All the villages ready to come to the help of Parma were ordered to leave the latter in the lurch; and the quicker to cow the fighting peasants, a large sum of money collected for them was withheld by the Confederation. This one example will show the extent of the rift between the Marxian Social Democratic Party and certain of the Italian Trade Union organisations. Direct action being revolutionary action, is not acceptable to the leaders in the Confederation. But in any case, friction and ultimate conflict was always inevitable, for the Italian proletariat is full of generous impulse and audacity, and cannot assimilate the passive spirit of German Opportunism animating the Parliamentary rulers of the Labour Confederation. Unity between the various organisations being impossible owing to the growing divergence of views, the Congress will at least bring the Direct Actionists together and help to the solidifying of their body.

Mass meetings of protest against the increased price of bread and the high rents have been held in Rome, Naples, and other cities of late. The Mayors in some cities are installing ovens for the municipalisation of bread. The desecration of Rome by the builder and landed proprietor has been a scandal for years. Whole streets, many full of architectural interest, have been swept away to make room for new quarters for the bourgeoisie. No provision has been made for the ejected inhabitants, the result being that they are housed in wayside caves, beneath bridges, or in hovels far inferior to those run up for the survivors of Messina and neighbourhood. The site of their old homes is now covered with beautiful hotels, villas, and convents, for which the rich, like the poor for their hovels, are mercilessly rackrented by the landlords.

France.

A strike of linotypists in Paris which began a few weeks ago is arousing considerable interest, not because the men's wages were threatened, but because they decided that their already high pay was insufficient in view of the profit their firms derived from the invention of the machine. There is some mystery as to how the papers get printed; but certainly they appear, and yet the "linos" are "out." The public is not in sympathy with the strikers since these admit their pay of a shilling an hour was good, and it seemed strange to see a strike based on other principles than hunger-pay or lowered wages. The men say: "Admittedly, that we are well paid, we submit nevertheless that the masters have no right to the entire profits they derive from the linotype machine. Since its invention they have saved the wages of two out of every three compositors. It is only fair that a portion of these savings should return to our corporation, whose members suffered through the displacement of hand labour." A strike based on this novel demand is hardly likely to succeed, but it shows that Paris workmen are beginning to realise that they have as much right to country week-ends and luxuries as the rich. Meanwhile their

sisters, the seamstresses, have to work 17 hours a day for 1s. 2d. *per diem*. Why do not the men, now strongly organised everywhere, make strenuous efforts to organise their suffering women, and leave them no longer at the mercy of fiendish sweaters? There are excellent factory laws in France, but employers of female labour have soon learnt how to evade them, the unhappy women themselves aiding in their own ruin through the fierce necessity to simply earn a crust of bread. Even in the great modistes, the best fitter, worth her weight in gold to the firm, seldom gets more than 24s. a week; while the little apprentice thinks herself rich with 2s. 6d. Little do the women in the "smart set" of London or New York imagine the blood and tears their fine clothes have cost—and if they did, would they care?

Hungary.

"Off with its head—so much for Unions!" seems to be a growing device in some European States. The Metal Workers' Union, comprising some 21,000 members, with all its local sections, was recently abruptly dissolved by the Austro-Hungarian Government. It had come into conflict with the police some weeks earlier, and the latter declared that the president of the Union had distributed revolvers and loaded sticks among the men. The Carpenters' Union has since shared the same fate, and others are threatened with similar treatment. Protest meetings were held at once, and actually—a strange event where German centralised views obtain—a general strike of a day took place at Budapest.

United States.

Emma Goldman writes an interesting and amusing article in last month's *Mother Earth* on her arrest and subsequent acquittal in San Francisco. The arrest, to begin with, was a pure police outrage, as such on these occasions usually are. Comrade Goldman had arranged to give sundry lectures in the city. The first, in a crowded hall, was unmolested. No violent language was used and few police were visible. However, various arrests followed, and when reaching the hall for a second lecture, Emma herself, Reitman, and Buwalda—the soldier who got five years for shaking her hand when in uniform—were also arrested. Bail—at first fixed at 16,000 dollars, but afterwards reduced—was at once forthcoming, probably much to judicial surprise. The Judge's manner to the vagrant "criminals" brought before him on the day of the trial won Emma's sympathy. He was "still humane," having been but two months on the bench. "Not once did I hear an unkind word or even a reproach." "What is a man to do, your Honour, when he can find no work and is hungry? He must beg or steal." "Yes, yes, I know; I do not blame you. I do not think you a criminal. You are only unfortunate." Good for you, Judge! The comrades were in the hands of a clever young lawyer, who was not afraid to explain what Anarchism really means, a version differing considerably from that given by the world's police and press. The 'Frisco police had no evidence on which to base a prosecution. They were forced to admit that the audience at the first lecture was orderly, there was no violence in speech or otherwise. "Is that all?" queried the Judge. It was, and Emma and friends were dismissed. One strange Californian custom is disclosed in her article. The jury listen to the counsel's speech for the prosecution, but have to quit the Court when counsel for the defence begins his. "Twelve men who have the power to rob one of his freedom may listen to the prosecution, but must not hear the defence. Can there be more striking proof of the law's stupidity?" No wonder Anarchists despise it! Emma Goldman's intention was to remain in the city till early March and continue her lectures.

There has lately been published a survey of labour conditions in Pittsburg, taken by a band of expert sociologists who investigated on the spot for a year. We append a few of their statements. The workers come from every country on the globe. Twelve hours and more comprise the work-day, leaving them so exhausted that there is no time or inclination for reading, recreation, religion, or even home life. One man remarked that rather than continue free and in work under such conditions, he would be happier in prison. Fifty per cent. of all foreigners who come to Pittsburg contract typhoid fever within two years. When five hundred people were dying each year from it, the movement to clear the water-supply was blocked and exploited at every turn. In one part of Homestead, near the Carnegie-steel works, one baby in every three died before its second birthday. As for the toll on life, a Japanese veteran told one of the investigators that he looked upon his experience upon battlefields as commonplace compared to his experience in the steel mills. Over 500 men are killed annually, and an unknown number seriously injured. The public has never yet taken the trouble to sift the accidents and see what can be prevented. Pittsburg is a town which does not know the number of its children of school age, and not once in five years demanded a report from its Health Department. There is much more reading that is hideous in its significance as regards the waste of the workers' health and lives—reading on a par with facts in "The Jungle," about which many who read said, "It can't be true!" Does Carnegie never feel a little sick when he signs his cheques? Probably not. For pure density, nothing comes up to Scotch indifference. What Homestead was when he made it, it remains to-day.

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

PROPAGANDA NOTES.

[Reports of the Movement are specially invited, and should be sent in not later than the 25th of each month.]

GLASGOW.

On January 31 Comrade Turner lectured to the Secularists in the Hall, 110 Brunswick Street. The advertisement in *FREEDOM* and the *Glasgow Evening News* was the means of bringing together a number of comrades, some of them journeying from Paisley, Ayr, and Kilmarnock. At twelve noon our comrade gave a splendid address on "Peter Kropotkin: an Appreciation." His knowledge of Kropotkin was interesting, especially Kropotkin's renunciation of rank and wealth, as he belongs by birth to the highest aristocracy of Russia, and was educated at the College of Pages, a school in which only the sons of the nobles are admitted. His fame as a geographer, geologist, biologist and sociologist is well known. Some of his books are amongst the most valuable contributions to modern literature. Turner went on to show how Kropotkin will in character bear comparison with any of the fighters for freedom in all lands. It was quite a treat the way Turner handled some of the knotty problems, which was followed by keen discussion. One of his opponents became rather rude in his remarks, and our comrade, after quoting the saying of Confucius, "When you know a thing, to hold that you know it; and when you do not know a thing, to confess that you do not know it, this is knowledge," proceeded to give him a bit of advice. And it was given in such a manner that he fairly captivated the audience and made his tormentor squirm. Our opponents ought to study their adversary's side of the question before they condemn it, if it was for no other purpose than to make out a better argument. Motives of expediency may cause State Socialists to withhold the truth from men, but that crime cannot be laid at the door of the Anarchist.

In the evening his subject was "God and the State." Drawing particular attention to the life and work of Michael Bakounin, our comrade proceeded to show the futility of people calling themselves Freethinkers, who recognise no divine law, but put their trust in man-made laws—"on authority, not on liberty; on privilege, not on equality; on the exploitation, not on the brotherhood of men." At the conclusion questions were showered on him, chiefly by the State Socialists, but were answered in fine style, and vigorously applauded by the audience.

With all thanks to the Glasgow Secular Society for allowing their platform to Comrade Turner, hoping they will continue their broad-minded spirit in the future.

A. B. HOWIE.

Tooting Libertarian Socialist Society.

The above Society has been formed with a view of propagating Anarchist principles in the South-West districts of London. J. J. Richmond, 3 Mafeking Villas, Robinson Road, Tooting, who has been appointed secretary, and to whom all communications should be addressed, would be pleased to give dates and subjects of several comrades who would be willing to lecture on Anarchist philosophy.

Canning Town Group.

Meetings are held at the corner of Beckton Road every Sunday at 11.30 and 6.30. Speakers heartily welcomed.

New Southgate Socialist Society, Carlisle Place, The Avenue, New Southgate, N., March 19, at 8 p.m., S. C. Potter on "The Futility of Political Socialism."

East London Anarchist-Socialist Sunday School.

The East London Anarchist-Socialist Sunday School meets at 3.30 every Sunday at the Workers' Friend Club and Institute, 163 Jubilee Street, Mile End. Children in the district invited. An Esperanto class for adults and children is specially conducted by Comrade Dusa.

Liverpool Communist Sunday School.

Please note change of address—I.L.P. Rooms, Tagus Street (corner of Lodge Lane), every Sunday at 3 p.m. Music, songs, recitations, and short speeches. Donations are needed.—JAS. H. DICK, Secretary, 15 Boswell Street, Liverpool S.

MONTHLY ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

(February 11—March 4.)

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